

"THEM!"

9/4/53

PART I

FINAL

25

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CHANGES ARE TO BE MADE IN THIS SCRIPT
WITHOUT THE WRITTEN APPROVAL OF
J. L. WARNER, STEVE TRILLING or T. C. WRIGHT

CAST AND CREDITS

Warner Bros. Pictures

presents

James Whitmore	as	Sgt. Ben Peterson
Edmund Gwenn	as	Dr. Harold Medford
Joan Weldon	as	Dr. Patricia Medford
James Arness	as	Robert Graham

in

"T H E M!"

Onslow Stevens	with as	Brig. Gen. O'Brien
Sean McClory	as	Major Kibbee
Chris Drake	as	Ed Blackburn
Sandy Descher	as	A Little Girl
Mary Ann Hokanson	as	Mrs. Lodge
Don Shelton	as	Capt. of Troopers
Fess Parker	as	Crotty
Olin Howlin	as	Jensen

Produced by David Weisbart.
Directed by Gordon Douglas
Screen Play by Ted Sherdeman
Adaptation by Russell Hughes
Story by George Worthing Yates
Photography by Sid Hickox, A.S.C.
Art Director Stanley Fleischer
Film Editor Thomas Reilly, A.C.E.
Sound by Francis J. Scheid

Music by Bronislaw Kaper
Orchestrations by Robert Franklyn
Musical Direction by Ray Heindorf
Set Decorator G. W. Berntsen
Wardrobe by Moss Mabry
Powder & Effects by Ralph Ayres
Prop Construction by Dick Smith
Makeup Artist Gordon Bau
Assistant Director Russ Saunders

* * * *

(Please Destroy Previously Issued Cast & Credits)

1-20-54

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/6/53

a.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ROBERT GRAHAM..... A casual, but efficient, dedicated
FBI agent.

DR. PATRICIA MEDFORD..... About 27, very pretty and very
smart. With a PhD in entomology,
she's as much pure scientist as her
father - but pure female, too.

DR. HAROLD MEDFORD..... Nearly eighty, he is a brilliant
entomologist. Wears a hearing aid.
In preoccupied moments he forgets
Patricia is his daughter and,
treating her as a collaborating
scientist, refers to her as "Doctor".

SGT. BEN PETERSON..... of the New Mexico State Police.
About 34, rugged and competent.

ED BLACKBURN..... State Police Trooper about 25, a
chronic gum-chewer.

CAPTAIN OF TROOPERS..... A big man about fifty. Friendly
but impatient with nonsense,
sentiment, or heroics.

MAJOR KIBBEE..... Air Force veteran pilot, about 30.

BRIG. GEN. O'BRIEN..... An alert, young-looking fifty-year-
old Air Force career officer. Very
able with solid command presence.

CROTTY..... A Texan who is in a confusing situa-
tion. About 40.

A SHIP'S RADIO OPERATOR..... a bloody, bruised, heroic man.

JENSEN..... An interesting alcoholic who sees
ants instead of pink elephants.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/6/53
b:

CAST OF CHARACTERS (Cont.)

A GIRL CHILD..... who is orphaned in so terrifying a manner she loses the power of speech. About 6, she plays her role in a complete state of shock.

MRS. LODGE.....A distraught widow and mother of:

MIKE LODGEA manly boy about 8.

JERRY LODGE.....About 6. Wears a brace on one leg.

RYAN.....A Los Angeles police officer.

SUTTON.....A Los Angeles police officer.

DIXON.....A Los Angeles detective.

R.R. COP.....A fat, surly railroad cop.

WATCHMAN.....A freight yard watchman about 60.

A BLONDE.....Flashy, leggy call-girl type.

CITY ENGINEER.....A sober, L.A. city official.

A NEWSMAN.....A mature, responsible reporter.

A variety of New Mexico State Police TROOPERS; a CORONER; a POLICE DOCTOR; a couple of PSYCHIATRIC DOCTORS; assorted CIVILIANS who monitor news teletype machines and radio receivers; L.A. City POLICE. Most importantlyTHEM!

* * * * *

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
9/28/53
1.

FADE IN

1. EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE

DAY

CAMERA observes a desolate, lonely, eerie desert. MAIN and CREDIT TITLES are SUPERIMPOSED OVER SHOT. As Titles end, we begin to HEAR the drone of an o.s. airplane. CAMERA PANS UP and SEES a small aircraft (Cessna class - police plane).

2. ON PLANE

Markings identify it as "NEW MEXICO STATE POLICE" aircraft. The Pilot is searching the ground below, where, in b.g., we SEE a car traveling along a road.

3. EXT. DESERT ROAD RUNNING SHOT

DAY

A NEW MEXICO STATE POLICE car drives along. The troopers inside - a driver and passenger - look up at o.s. plane.

4. ON PLANE

as Pilot picks up radio mike.

5. INT. POLICE CAR (PROCESS)

DAY

Driving is trooper ED BLACKBURN, 26, a chronic gum-chewer. Beside him is Sergeant BEN PETERSON, about 34, rugged and competent looking. The car radio sounds off;

PILOT'S VOICE:

Three-oh-one-A to Car 5W. Code one.

BEN:

(picking up car mike)

5 W to 301A. Go ahead, Johnny.

PILOT'S VOICE:

I think we're chasin' the wind, Ben. Maybe the guy who sent in the report drank his breakfast. We might as well call it a...wait a minute...

DIALOGUE
CHANGE

6. ON PLANE

The pilot is looking down with sudden interest.

7. FROM PILOT'S VIEWPOINT

We SEE what appears to be a red blob moving slowly across the desert floor. As we get CLOSER, we distinguish it as a white child, a girl about six, wearing a red bathrobe. As the plane passes over her;

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
2.

8. ON PLANE

as it begins climbing and circling the pilot picks up the radio mike again.

9. EXT. DESERT ROAD RUNNING SHOT DAY

The troopers in the car react to car radio sounding off again;

PILOT'S VOICE:

It's a kid all right...maybe fifty yards off the road. I'll keep circling her until you pick her up. Ten-ten.

The car speeds up.

10. ON PLANE

as it circles. CAMERA PANS DOWN to SEE a child approaching. As she walks into a CLOSE SHOT and the CAMERA begins to DOLLY WITH HER, we note she wears a red bathrobe over night clothes; bedroom slippers; she clutches a doll from which the head has been jaggedly broken. A piece of material has been torn from the bathrobe. The striking quality is the expression on the girl's face. She appears to be in a state of intense shock - or a hypnotic trance. She does not react in any way. We HEAR the police car brake to a stop o.s.

11. ON CAR

The New Mexico State Police car has stopped. Child can be seen in b.g. Out of the car steps Ben. He calls to the girl:

BEN:

Hey!

(child doesn't react or stop)

Hey - little girl!

The girl apparently hears nothing. The troopers glance at each other, then Ben starts after the child. Blackburn remains in the car.

12. ON GIRL AND BEN

as Ben comes up to her. Car is in b.g.

BEN:

Little girl?

No response. Reaching her, Ben stops the girl with a hand on her shoulder. She doesn't look at him or react in any way. only continues to stare at nothing. Ben observes her a moment.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
3.

12 (Cont.)

BEN:

What're you doing out here all alone, honey?
(no response)

What's your name? Who do you belong to?

He squats down until his head is on a level with hers. He observes her keenly. He moves his hand past her eyes. She doesn't blink. As Ben stands erect and moves away from in front of her, the child resumes her aimless walk to nowhere. Ben halts her again and picks her up. She doesn't resist. Carrying her, he turns back to the car. We begin to HEAR Blackburn talking;

BLACKBURN:

(to car mike)

Ten-nine, Johnny.

PILOT'S VOICE:

(from car radio)

I said I don't see anybody around it. You'd better check it out. It's about three miles ahead of you, pulled off to the side of the road. Ten-ten.

13. ON CAR

Blackburn is talking to the car microphone, watching Ben as he carries the child to the car.

BLACKBURN:

(to mike)

Okay, Johnny. Ten-ten.

He hangs the microphone on the dashboard and reaches over to open the car door for Ben. He regards the girl curiously as Ben lifts her into the car to ride between them in the front seat. The girl remains as mute and inanimate as her doll.

BLACKBURN:

What's the matter with her? Sunstroke?

BEN:

I don't know.

(regarding girl)

She isn't burned so she couldn't've been out in the sun very long. Looks like she's in shock.

BLACKBURN:

Johnny spotted a car and trailer up ahead. She might be from there.

BEN:

(looks worriedly at girl)

Okay.

(feels her forehead)

This kid's like ice.

(CONTINUED)

13 (Cont.)

Blackburn is starting to drive, as we

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

14. INT. POLICE CAR (PROCESS)

DAY

As the car drives, the little girl dozes off against Ben. They look o.s. and react.

15. ANGLE THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Police car is approaching a sedan and trailer parked a few yards off the road. From this viewpoint we see no damage, although the vehicles appear deserted. The police car stops.

16. ON GROUP

in front seat. The girl is now asleep, cradled in Ben's arm. Blackburn looks from the car and trailer o.s. to the girl.

BLACKBURN:

(quietly)

No use wakin' her up unless somebody here can identify her.

(Ben nods)

I'll check it.

Blackburn quietly eases out of the car, closing his door silently.

17. EXT. DESERT ROAD FROM BEN'S VIEWPOINT

DAY

as Blackburn walks away from police car. He pauses to look inside the sedan, then walks around it to view the other side of the sedan and trailer. He stops, then turns to Ben and beckons for him to come.

18. ON BEN

As he eases himself out of the car he gently lets the girl lie down in the front seat. Her broken doll falls to the floorboards. Ben leaves it there. The girl does not awaken. He starts for Blackburn.

19. ANOTHER ANGLE

as Ben comes alongside Blackburn. Both men stare towards the trailer, o.s.

20. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

The trailer campsite is a shambles. An awning erected as a sun shade is now torn loose and is shredded and sagging. The door to the trailer has been ripped from its hinges and lies on the ground, bent and crumpled by some tremendous force. The entrance to the trailer itself has been enlarged into a big jagged opening. Personal belongings, odds and ends, are scattered about as though someone had ransacked the interior and then tossed everything aside.

21. ON BEN AND BLACKBURN

They look at each other wonderingly. Ben unbuttons the flap on his holster and starts for the trailer. Blackburn stands to one side, ready to cover him. Ben moves quietly through the litter and looks inside the trailer. He nods at Blackburn and enters the trailer. Blackburn follows.

22. INT. TRAILER

DAY

The interior is a shambles - cabinets broken open as if by crowbars. Canned goods scattered about. Flour spilled. Only the far, quite narrow front end of the trailer, where a small bunk extends across the width of the vehicle, seems undamaged. Ben is observing the chaos as Blackburn enters behind him. Blackburn emits a low, awed whistle. Ben nods at a woman's slip, torn and blood-stained. Blackburn points out a Boy Scout Merit Badge sash. They look at other personal effects - little girl's clothing; things suitable for a boy of 13; some man's and woman's effects.

BEN:

Two adults - two kids.

Blackburn nods agreement - points at floor. Ben looks.

23. ON FLOOR

Paper money scattered on floor - several hundred dollars.

24. ON BEN AND BLACKBURN

They are increasingly puzzled.

BLACKBURN:

Why was that left?

Ben shakes his head. His eyes go to something o.s.

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
6.

25. NEW VIEWPOINT

A large, empty carton marked "CUBE SUGAR" lies on a large bloodstain atop a cabinet surface. Ben moves to stain, touches it.

BEN:

Blood. From the looks and feel of it, it's not over ten or twelve hours old. Whatever happened here must have taken place last night or early this morning.

(Blackburn nods agreement)

Check outside, Ed.

Blackburn exits. Ben looks about - sees something on floor towards front of trailer. He moves towards it and kneels.

26. ON BEN

as he eyes a snub-nosed .38 revolver on the floor. Using a pencil, he carefully inserts it into the barrel of the weapon and picks it up. He sniffs the muzzle; notes the chambers with the spent rounds. He returns the weapon to the position he found it. He rises and studies the forward end of the trailer. It is narrow and most of the little girl's effects are here. He moves to look under a small storage space beneath a bunk (or cabinet) and pulls out a suitcase. The space is large enough for the little girl to have hidden in behind the suitcase. He notes a small remnant of red material caught on one metal corner of the suitcase. He removes remnant, then looks further beneath the storage space. He reaches for something and comes up with the head from the broken doll. He compares the cloth and head; reflects a moment, then starts for the entrance.

27. ON ENTRANCE OF TRAILER

Ben pauses and observes the savage, clawed and torn manner in which the opening has been enlarged. Jagged wood and/or metal is bent outward - not inward. He is increasingly puzzled. Blackburn appears.

BLACKBURN:

Sure no traffic accident, was it?

Ben shakes his head and looks at the opening again.

BEN:

No. This wasn't caved in - it was caved out.
(to Blackburn)

Find anything?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
7.

27 (Cont.)

BLACKBURN:

No footprints or tire marks. Found this...
(hands Ben cube of sugar)
I picked up just one. There are five or
six more scattered over there. Sugar.

Ben looks at the sugar cube, then looks back inside the
trailer.

28. FROM HIS VIEWPOINT

The empty sugar cube carton on the cabinet top.

29. ON BEN AND BLACKBURN

Ben looks at Blackburn. Both men are increasingly be-
wildered.

BLACKBURN:

And I don't know whether this is anything
important or not. Come on.

They walk off some yards from the trailer and stop.
Blackburn points at the ground. Ben squats for a closer
look.

30. CLOSE ON PRINT IN SAND

It is a strange print impression in the sand. It is circu-
lar, the spread of a man's hand, bracketed between two
crescent-shaped indentations that suggest hooks.

BLACKBURN'S VOICE:

(o.s.)

Mountain lions never come down into the
desert.

BEN'S VOICE:

(o.s.)

No cat ever lived that'd leave that kind of
print.

BLACKBURN'S VOICE:

(o.s.)

Maybe something was set down here?... can,
bag - something like that?

31. ON BEN AND BLACKBURN

as Ben rises. He stares a moment at the print then looks at the cloth remnant and doll's head. He starts for the police car with

BEN:

Found these inside. Put in the call. Get fingerprint and moulage equipment out here - and have the medics come along to pick up the girl.

32. ON POLICE CAR

as they come to the car. Blackburn picks up the mike and puts in the call. During following, Ben opens the door and, without awakening the child, learns that the remnant matches the torn place in the bathrobe and the doll head fits the broken doll perfectly.

BLACKBURN:

Car 5W to KMA 628. Come in please.

MALE VOICE:

(from car radio)

KMA 628 to Car 5W. Go ahead.

BLACKBURN:

We're twelve miles north of the crossroads, half way up the secondary road to White Butte. Sedan with Illinois license, trailer attached. Looks like a nine fourteen. Picked up a little girl who seems to be in shock. Send ambulance and medics. We'll remain at scene until you arrive.

(looks at Ben)

Anything else?

(Ben shakes his head)

Ten-ten.

MALE VOICE:

(from car radio)

KMA 628 to 5W. Location previously reported by 301A. Will dispatch ambulance. Ten-ten.

Blackburn hangs the mike back on the dashboard and looks at Ben. Ben shows how the doll's head fits on the doll. They look at the child, sleeping as if she was dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

33. EXT. DESERT ROAD AT TRAILER CAMPSITE DAY (LATE)

A flashbulb explodes in the CAMERA. As the flash dies away, the police photographer moves past CAMERA and we see an ambulance and several more police cars. Ben is at the ambulance,

(CONTINUED)

33 (Cont.)

watching the driver and a white-coated INTERNE put the little girl onto a litter in the ambulance.

34. CLOSER ON REAR OF AMBULANCE

As the girl is put inside. She is awake, lying flat on her back, still clutching the broken doll. The Interne turns to Ben.

INTERNE:
No idea what happened to her?
(Ben shakes his head)
Don't know her name?

BEN:
No. Look, take good care of her, huh?

INTERNE:
We'll give her a nice, easy ride right into the hospital. I'll be with her all the way.

The Interne starts to get into the ambulance when, from far off we HEAR a strange, high NOISE that wavers slightly. This is the stridulation of THEM -- not a theramin. At its highest frequency peak it is almost intolerable when close at hand. Ben looks off. The Interne looks off. Framed between them is the little girl lying on the litter. She suddenly sits up, reacting to the FAINT SOUND. Neither man notices her reaction.

INTERNE:
What's that?
BEN:
I don't know.

The stridulation ceases. The girl lies down. The Interne shrugs.

INTERNE:
Probably the wind. It gets pretty freakish in these parts.

BEN:
Yeah.
(as Interne gets into ambulance)
I'll get in as soon as I can. I want to be there when she starts talkin'.

The Interne nods, closes the door and the ambulance pulls away. Ben watches after it a moment then turns toward the campsite.

35. THE CAMPSITE

The photographer is at work. Several other troopers are cataloguing effects. A slight wind has started to blow. We are a few minutes from sunset and darkness. Ben is

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
10.

35 (Cont.)

PANNED as he walks to a police-uniformed LAB MAN who is squatting down looking at the strange print. Moulage equipment is at hand.

BEN:

Know what it is?

LAB MAN:

Not the faintest idea.

BEN:

(reacts to blowing sand)

We want a mold of it. You'd better do it quick before the wind fills in the depression. Looks like a sandstorm's kicking up.

LAB MAN:

(fussing with equipment)

You and Ed got any idea what happened out here?

BEN:

Nope...

(exits with)

...nothin' that adds up.

CAMERA PANS with Ben as he goes to Blackburn who is leaning against one side of the trailer, idly watching the crime lab men working. Ben and Blackburn look at each other.

BEN:

(thoughtfully)

How old d'you figure that kid is?

BLACKBURN:

(he's been thinking about the same thing)

Five or six. Tough break for her.

BEN:

Yeah.

(looks around)

C'mon - they don't need us here. Let's go down to Gramps Johnson's store at the crossroads. Maybe he heard or saw somethin'.

They exit around the trailer, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

36. EXT. DESERT STORE

NIGHT

In f.g. is a desert store. The gusty wind swirls clouds of sand against and around the battered old structure. There is an old hand-crank gasoline pump outside. Lights are on - those that hang are swinging in the wind. Lights are on inside the store as well. Down the road we see the approaching headlamps of the police car. It pulls in and stops beside the gasoline pump.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
9/28/53
11:

37. ON CAR

The troopers get out of the car. Ben waits for Blackburn to come around the car. The door of the store in the b.g. swings open and shut - swung by the wind. The two approach the store and enter.

38. INT. DESERT STORE ON DOOR

NIGHT

as Ben and Blackburn enter. From o.s. we HEAR a radio playing music.

BEN:

Hey, Gramps, you're gonna get sand up your nose.

He stops. Both men are startled at the interior.

39. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

A square-type building. From the door, to the left, is a counter. Behind it a door leading to the owner's living quarters. To the right of this, another door and a broken wall, beyond which we see into what served as a storage room. At extreme right is a pot-bellied stove and some chairs - a social corner.

The interior is wrecked--even as the trailer. As the wind-blow hanging light swings back and forth, eerie shadows are cast among the wrecked shelves, canned goods, bolts of cloth, etc. The SOUND of the radio comes from the living quarters.

40. ON TROOPERS

They stare with disbelief at the wreckage. Ben crosses to the living quarters and opens the door. The light is on inside this room. The radio SOUNDS louder.

41. BEN'S VIEWPOINT

The living quarters of an old man. One room containing a neatly made cot. Clothes hanging from pegs on one wall. A small radio playing. A little bureau. Some mementos. No signs of destruction. No signs of life.

42. ON BEN

As he closes the door and turns to look around. He is PANNED to Blackburn who is holding a 30-30 rifle. Blackburn looks up. The barrel is bent almost double. Both men wince. Blackburn sees something o.s. and points. Ben looks.

DIALOGUE
CHANGE

43. ANOTHER ANGLE

as the troopers cross to an opened trap door in the floor. They look down into it and react.

44. ANGLE THROUGH TRAP DOOR

The swinging light from above indicates this to be a storage cellar. The bottom is reached by climbing down a ladder. Lying, face up, at the bottom of the ladder, is an old man - dead - mangled.

45. CLOSE ON DEAD MAN

The light comes and goes as it swings from the room above, lighting the tortured face. His eyes stare up at us. His mouth is pulled into an expression of hideous pain and fear.

BEN'S VOICE: (O.S.)

It's Gramps Johnson.

46. ON TROOPERS

They are squatting down, viewing the body o.s. below. Ben winces and looks away. He observes the floor. There is a trail of blood beginning some four feet away and ending at the trap door.

BEN:

Looks like he was dragged and thrown down there.

BLACKBURN:

(uncertainly)

Yeah, or...but, no. That's crazy.

BEN:

Go on.

BLACKBURN:

Well... maybe he was tryin' to get away from something. Maybe he jumped down there to...but that's what's crazy about it. Gramps was no fool. He wouldn't have comered himself in a fight.

Ben rises and regards the wreckage of the interior. He nods at the storage room and goes towards it. Blackburn takes a last look at Gramps, then follows.

47. NEW ANGLE

We SEE there was once a back door from the outside into the storage room. The door and the surrounding wall area have been broken away - pulled down by some outside force. The storage room is a mess. Bags of root vegetables have been broken

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
13.

47 (Cont.)

into and abandoned. Canned goods lie everywhere. Flour is spilled about. Nearby a large barrel marked "SUGAR" is tipped over and nearly emptied. Lying half through the broken outside opening is another barrel, marked the same, with only a trace of sugar spillage left.

Ben and Blackburn survey this wreckage. Ben eyes the broken outside wall.

BEN:

Holy...look at that outside wall, Ed. What d'you make of it?

BLACKBURN:

(wryly)

What'd you make of the trailer?

BEN:

Yeah.

He moves to the closer sugar barrel and indicates it to Blackburn. Then he moves to the farther barrel. He looks down at it - bends and looks closer.

48. CLOSE ON BARREL

A stream of small ants are busily working on the sugar spillage.

49. ON BEN

He rises - regards the outside wall.

BEN:

Just like at the trailer - not rammed through but more as if the wall had been pulled down from the outside.

(regards sugar barrel again)

And sugar. Same as at the trailer.

He looks at Blackburn. They're both mystified. Ben gets an idea and suddenly leaves the storage room; is PANNED to the cash register sitting on the counter.

50. ANGLE OVER BEN'S SHOULDER AT CASH REGISTER

He punches a key; the cash drawer flies open and we SEE there is money in it.

BEN:

Money wasn't stolen here, either.

lb
hh

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
9/23/53
14.

51. ON BEN AND BLACKBURN

as Ben closes the cash drawer and comes out from behind the counter. He looks around for a moment, then:

BEN:

This is another nine-fourteen.
(Blackburn nods)

Look, Ed, I'll put in a call for the boys at the trailer to stop here. I want to get into headquarters and be there when that little girl starts talkin'.

BLACKBURN:

(nods)

Okay - I'll wait for the guys from the trailer and ride in with them.

Ben takes a last look and then exits. Blackburn goes to the door and looks out. Presently we HEAR the police car start and drive away. Only the wind sounds remain - and the radio playing from the living quarters. Blackburn looks toward the living quarters. The radio suddenly gets on his nerves.

He crosses to the door, enters Gramps' room. The radio music stops and the light goes out inside the room. Blackburn reappears and closes the door. He stands for a moment, looking about. As he does, he unwraps a new piece of chewing gum and folds it into his mouth. He moves to look down through the trap door again. As he looks, he HEARS the sudden sound of stridulation rather close at hand. He jerks his revolver from his holster and reaches up and turns out the light overhead with one motion. He sidles quickly along the inner wall of the storage room and hits the light switch. The storage room goes dark. Revolver ready, Blackburn waits. The stridulation noise ceases. He pauses a moment, then carefully moves into the storage room.

52. ANGLE IN STORAGE ROOM

as Blackburn carefully picks his way through the debris to the jagged opening in the back corner wall. He can see very little. He moves out through the opening and disappears around to one side. The CAMERA PANS until we SEE through the window. Blackburn appears, moving through the swirling sand, weapon ready. He becomes almost lost in the swirl when we glimpse the muzzle flash and HEAR several rapid shots. Then Blackburn screams. Then we HEAR the sound of stridulation, high, loud and close. It ceases and only the wind sounds are left, as we

DISSOLVE THROUGH T.

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
15.

53. INT. EMERGENCY HOSPITAL ROOM
ON GIRL AND DOCTOR

NIGHT

This is the type of medical room where minor accident cases are patched up or victims of violence are given first aid before being sent to a hospital. The police DOCTOR, wearing a reflector on a headband, sits before the little girl. In b.g. we can see Ben watching. The doctor picks up an ophthalmoscope then turns out the main light overhead. He bends forward to examine the girl's eyes.

54. CLOSE ON GIRL

The beam of light from the instrument strikes one eye - then the other. CAMERA PULLS BACK as the doctor concludes. He turns on the main overhead light again and lays the instrument aside. He stands and walks around behind the girl. Suddenly he claps his hands loudly. There is still no reactions. The doctor turns to Ben and shrugs. Ben comes to him.

DOCTOR:

No reaction. My guess is she's in some kind of psychic shock - almost like a deep trance.

(lifts girl's hair to
examine base of her skull)

She hasn't been physically injured. No head wounds. No broken bones. Physiologically, she seems to be okay.

(shakes his head)

Whatever happened out at that trailer was so terrifying to her she seems temporarily mute as a result. At least, that's my opinion.

BEN:

But she's our only witness, Doc. Isn't there some way you can get her to talk?

DOCTOR:

(shakes head)

This is out of my line. She needs a psychiatrist. There are some head-doctors at the hospital. Maybe they can do something.

BEN:

(looks at girl; sighs)

Let me know the minute they get her talkin'.

DOCTOR:

Don't hold your breath. It may be quite a spell.

Ben glances at him, then pats the girl on one cheek, and exits.

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
16.

55. INT. POLICE OFFICE ON DOOR NIGHT

Ben enters, nearly colliding with a TROOPER about to leave the room.

TROOPER:

Oh, Sergeant - I was just goin' after you.
Radio call just came in from Gramps' place.

BEN:

Yeah? What'd they find?

TROOPER:

Ed Blackburn's cap and empty revolver.

56. ON BEN

He freezes at this news.

TROOPER'S VOICE: (O.S.)

No trace of him...any place.

CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER on Ben's anguished face, as we

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

57. INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE, POLICE HEADQUARTERS DAY -(DAWN).
ANGLE ON TABLE

On the table we see some of the personal effects from the trailer, including the broken doll. A bit apart from them we see Blackburn's cap and police revolver. In immediate f.g. is a plaster cast of the print. Also on table is Gramps' damaged 30-30 rifle. Each article is tagged. In b.g. Ben sits, resting his forehead on the back of another chair. He looks tired, unshaven - a man who's worked all night. OVER THIS we HEAR:

CAPTAIN'S VOICE: (O.S.)

.....so, with all this stuff, we only know that the car and trailer was owned by a guy named Allen Elinson from Chicago.

(pause)

Look, Ben...

..(Ben looks up; a haggard face)

Stop blamin' yourself for whatever happened to Ed Blackburn.

58. ANOTHER ANGLE

We see more of the office. On the other side of the table stands a Captain of Troopers. A big man, fifty or so. Another Trooper is present, plus the LAB MAN.

(CONTINUED)

1b
ah

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
9/24/53
17.

58 (Cont.)

CAPTAIN:

(continuing)

It wasn't your fault. Somebody had to stay at Johnson's place. So it happened to be Ed.

Ben rubs his face punishingly and sits up in his chair.

CAPTAIN:

(continuing)

We'll find out who killed him - if he is dead - along with Gramps and this Elinson family - so come off it.

(Ben doesn't speak)

We'll get a report on the fingerprints sometime this morning. That'll tell us more.

(indicates mold)

You figured out what this is yet?

LAB MAN:

No sir.

CAPTAIN:

(pauses; to trooper)

Run down all of Gramps' personal stuff and records. I don't think he had an enemy in the world but somebody might've...

(shakes head)

But that's what doesn't make sense. If somebody wanted to knock off Gramps - why tear down half the building to do it?

BEN:

I asked for a check on mental institutions. Everything seems to indicate a homicidal maniac - I mean no money stolen, violent wreckage - just sugar taken.

CAPTAIN:

They're bein' checked but that's a waste of time, too. We'd've been notified if a looney killer was loose. On top of that...

(picks up Gramps' bent rifle)

...Gramps got off four shots from his thirty-thirty before the killer did this to the gun. And Blackburn was a crack shot. He could hit anything he could see.

(puts rifle back)

Unless your maniac is armored like a battleship, there's no maniac in this case... I want every available man scoutin' the desert - and if our two planes aren't enough to cover areas the cars can't reach - I'll get permission from the chief to hire a couple more.

DIALOGUE
PAGE

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
18.

58 (Cont.1)

CAPTAIN (Cont.)

(to Ben)

You get yourself somethin' to eat then grab some sleep. I don't want you wearin' yourself out so that when something happens you fold up on us.

BEN:

I've got a little score to settle.

CAPTAIN:

We all have.

He turns as the door opens. A TROOPER enters with a teletype.

TROOPER:

Report from Washington, Captain.

CAPTAIN:

(takes teletype; reads it; looks up)

Fingerprints in the trailer check out real good. Mr. Elinson was an FBI agent on an extended two months vacation with his wife and two children.

(passes teletype to Ben)

Call the local FBI office. They've got a stake in this case now. Tell them Mr. Elinson's vacation looks like it's been extended indefinitely.

DISSOLVE TO:

59. INT. CORRIDOR ANGLE TOWARD ENTRANCE DAY

Through entrance we see, parked in front, two police cars and several motorcycles. A police car enters and parks. Ben is driving. With him is ROBERT GRAHAM. He is a casual, but dedicated FBI man. His shirtsleeves are rolled up and his necktie is pulled loose from his open collar. Both men look tired and hot. They get out of the car and enter the corridor. Graham carries his suit jacket.

GRAHAM:

I'm glad to get off that desert. Must've been a hundred and ten out there.

They come down hallway to office door marked "District Supervisor, New Mexico State Police, Otero County." Ben opens the door and lets Graham enter first.

60. INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE POLICE HEADQUARTERS

As Graham and Ben enter, they find the Captain shaving with an electric razor. The Captain is half-bending over, trying to see his reflection in the glass door of a bookcase - using this in lieu of a mirror. As he looks at Ben and Graham:

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
19.

60 (Cont.)

BEN:

Captain Edwards, this is Robert Graham from the FBI office in Alamogordo.

The Captain crosses to shake hands with Graham, forgetting that his razor is plugged in, and unplugs it in the process. They shake hands.

CAPTAIN:

Has Ben here brought you up to date on this business?

During the following the Captain returns to the book-case, plugs in his razor and resumes shaving.

GRAHAM:

Yes, sir, he has.

(nods at evidence on table)

Went over the exhibits with me before we left this morning.

BEN:

I took him out to where we found the trailer and then to Johnson's store. We spent most of the day there.

CAPTAIN:

You get any ideas, Mr. Graham?

GRAHAM:

None that make any sense.

CAPTAIN:

(winks at Ben)

I thought you FBI guys were all quiz kids - solved everything right away.

GRAHAM:

(grins)

I did too when I applied for the job.

During the following, Graham comes to the table where the tagged evidence is still on display. He picks up the plaster cast of the print and regards it thoughtfully.

BEN:

(to Captain)

The patrol cars and the planes haven't spotted anything yet.

CAPTAIN:

(unplugging his razor)

Give 'em time...people don't just drop off the face of the earth without a trace. We'll find 'em.

(to Graham)

Do you know what that is?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
20.

60 (Cont.1)

GRAHAM:

Has it been identified yet?

CAPTAIN:

(putting shaver in his desk)

No. One of the officers even took it over to a friend of his who teaches zoology at the college. He said he'd never seen anything like it.

(looks wryly at evidence on table)

Lots of evidence, we're loaded with clues - and nothing adds up.

BEN:

Our only real bet is the little Elinson girl. Is there any news about her yet?

CAPTAIN:

No change. We checked the hospital a half hour ago.

Graham is still interested in the cast. It bothers him. He turns to the Captain.

GRAHAM:

If you don't mind I'd like to send this, or a copy of it, to Washington. The bureau might be able to identify it - or at least prove it's nothing.

CAPTAIN:

It's all right with me.

They look toward the door as it opens and a civilian, the CORONER, enters.

CORONER:

Hi, Fred - Ben.

CAPTAIN:

Do you two know each other? This is Doc Putnam, County Medical Officer - Robert Graham. He's with the FBI, so watch your language.

Graham and the coroner shake hands and say "hello."

DOC PUTNAM:

(taking a paper from pocket)

I finished the autopsy on Gramps Johnson. You want it technical or plain?

CAPTAIN:

Just plain, Doc; get to the verb.

DOC PUTNAM:

Old man Johnson could have died in any one of five ways. His neck and back were broken, his chest was crushed, his skull was fractured, and...here's...

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
21.

60 (Cont.2)

DOC PUTNAM: (Cont.)

for Sherlock Holmes...there was enough formic acid in him to kill twenty men.

Eyebrows go up and they stare at each other, more mystified than ever, as we

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

61. INSERT TELEGRAM IN BEN'S HANDS

it reads; "DOCTORS MEDFORD OF DEPT AGRICULTURE ARRIVING ARMY AIRCRAFT APPROX 1500 HOURS YOUR TIME. MEET AND EXTEND ALL COOPERATION."

62. EXT. AIR FORCE BASE

DAY

Graham and Ben are standing beside a jeep. Graham has his collar unbuttoned, his tie pulled down, his suit jacket slung over a shoulder like a potato sack. Ben is reading the telegram and seems puzzled by it. In b.g. is view of Air Force Base with ground and air activity. Ben hands the telegram back to Graham.

BEN:

I still don't get this. It says Doctors Medford - plural - two of them. Brothers?

(Graham shrugs)

And from the Department of Agriculture? I thought you sent that cast to your outfit in Washington.

GRAHAM:

I did.

BEN:

Does this mean somebody's identified it?

Graham shrugs. He doesn't know. An AIRMAN 3rd Class enters and addresses Graham;

AIRMAN:

The plane you're waiting for has landed, sir. It'll unload right over there.

He points. Graham and Ben look o.s.

63. ANGLE ON PLANE

A plane taxis toward CAMERA. As it reaches us, it turns, one wing zooming out over audience. Graham and Ben enter in f.g. Field attendants push a portable ladder or stairway against the fuselage. The first to appear from the plane is DR. HAROLD MEDFORD. He's nearly seventy, wears a hearing aid.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
22.

63 (Cont.)

His rumpled suit covers a thin frame. His sparse grey hair flies in the wind. He squints against the brilliant New Mexico sun. As one of the attendants reaches to help him, he rejects the aid testily. At the bottom of the ladder he peers about. Graham, with Ben following, enter and approach Medford.

GRAHAM:

Doctor Medford?

MEDFORD:

(fiddles with hearing aid)

What?

GRAHAM:

(louder)

Are you Dr. Medford?

MEDFORD:

Yes. No need to shout. Oh - you're the people - got a message some place - said you'd meet us.

GRAHAM:

(grins)

My name's Bob Graham. This is Sergeant Ben Peterson.

MEDFORD:

(looks at Ben keenly)

Oh - you're the one who found the print, eh?

(Ben nods; Medford shouts at plane)

Pat! Hurry up!

Ben and Graham look up. Graham gulps a little.

64. FROM THEIR VIEW POINT

A cheesecake view of some very shapely legs coming down the ladder. One of the field attendants gives an appreciative whistle. At this, the girl's face appears as she gives a little fussed grin at her admirer. This is PATRICIA "Pat" MEDFORD. About 27, she is a remarkably pretty girl with a whistle-bait figure nicely accented by a smart traveling suit. She reaches the bottom of the ladder and looks with interest at Graham and Ben.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
23.

64 (Cont.)

MEDFORD:

This is the other Doctor Medford, gentlemen.
My daughter, Patricia. This is the man who
found the print uh...Sergeant uh.
(can't remember names)

BEN:

Ben Peterson, ma'am.

PATRICIA:

(shakes hands)

Oh yes.

(to Graham)

Then you must be Mr. Robert Graham.

GRAHAM:

(shakes hands, a little stunned
by this pretty girl)

Uh - yessum. How d'you do. Uh, we've got
a car right over here. We'll take you to
a hotel....

MEDFORD:

(interrupts impatiently)

The hotel can wait. We've got things to do.
I want to read all your reports right away.

He takes Patricia's arm and starts off. In b.g. we see
attendant lifting down the Medfords' luggage. Ben glances
at Graham. The FBI man is buttoning his shirt collar,
tightening his tie. He puts on his suit jacket, glancing
at his rumpled trousers.

GRAHAM:

(mutters)

Should've had 'em pressed.

(CONTINUED)

64 (Cont.)

BEN:
(smiles a little)
Quite a doctor, huh?

They've started following the Medfords. Graham's eyes are on Patricia.

65. HIS VIEWPOINT

Walking beside her father toward the police car, Patricia looks mighty tasty.

GRAHAM:
If she's the kind that treats sick people,
I'm going to work up a fever real quick.

DISSOLVE TO:

66. INT. FBI OFFICE
CLOSE ON WALL MAP

DAY

of New Mexico. It is a large scale map. Attention is on the White Sands area where two colored pins indicate the locations of Elinson's trailer and Johnson's store. Graham's finger is pointing at one pin, as:

GRAHAM'S VOICE:
(o.s.)
This is where the Elinson car and trailer
were found...
(points at second pin)
...and twelve miles down this road is the
Johnson store.

The ANGLE WIDENS and we see Graham standing before the wall map. Seated at a desk is Medford, holding a report. He nods, and, readjusting his glasses, resumes reading. Patricia half-sits against the edge of the desk. The plaster cast is beside her. Ben stands nearby. Patricia picks up the cast. Graham observes her as she examines the cast thoughtfully:

GRAHAM:
How come the FBI office in Washington sent
that to the Department of Agriculture?

PATRICIA:
(matter-of-factly)
They weren't able to identify it.
(to Ben)
You've only found one print?....the one this
cast was made from?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
25.

66 (Cont.)

BEN:

That's all.

GRAHAM:

Have you identified it?

Patricia only glances at him. At this moment, Medford looks up from the report and passes it to her.

MEDFORD:

The Medical Officer's report on Mr. Johnson suggests we were certainly wrong to even consider this business might be a hoax.

(points out paragraph for her)

Read that, Doctor.

(turns and regards map)

In what area was the atomic bomb exploded?

I mean the first one - back in 1945.

Graham and Ben look at each other a little startled. Graham indicates an area on the map.

GRAHAM:

In this general area of White Sands.

Medford nods as if this confirmed something to him. Patricia, now finished reading the paragraph, looks up at him. He touches the cast.

MEDFORD:

Mmmmm...1945...that's eight years ago...
Genetically, it's certainly possible.

Patricia nods. Graham and Ben have listened with increasing impatience.

GRAHAM:

Look, we're grown-up. There's no need to play footsie with us. In fact, we resent it.

(to Patricia)

If you know what this thing is, "Doctor" - tell us.

(to Medford)

We're assigned to this case too, you know.

MEDFORD:

Mr. Graham, we cannot tell you until we are absolutely sure of our theory. Now I'd like to first stop off at a drug store, then go and see the little Elinson girl.

BEN:

You won't learn anything from her. The hospital doctors haven't been able to make her speak yet.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
26.

66 (Cont.1)

MEDFORD:

(starting for door)

And after the girl, I want to examine the area
where you found the print.

Patricia follows her father. Graham and Ben glance at each
other. Graham irritably pulls his necktie loose and un-
buttons his shirt collar. He's not going to be uncomforta-
ble for this girl.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

67. INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

DAY

In f.g. a female PSYCHIATRIST, wearing glasses, costumed in
a hospital coat, talks to Medford and Graham. In b.g., the
little girl sits in a chair, staring vacantly out the window.
Beside her is a pleasant-looking WOMAN. Patricia and Ben
stand beyond the child, observing her.

PSYCHIATRIST:

(with nod at woman)

As I explained to Mrs. Johnson, the little girl's
aunt...we hesitate using curare to diminish
the muscular spasms because she's too young.
Narcosynthesis is a useless procedure until
we've overcome the condition of aphoria.

GRAHAM:

What's "aphoria?"

PSYCHIATRIST:

Loss of voice. She's a classic case of hysteria
conversion - nearly all of her sensory capacity
has been psychically paralyzed by whatever
happened that night. Only a severe catharsis
can jolt her at all and...

MEDFORD:

(interrupts)

May I have a small glass, please? Pat....?

(as Patricia looks at him)

The acid we got?

Patricia comes forward and gives him a small bottle with a
drugstore label on it. The psychiatrist hesitates in
handing Medford an ounce glass she's picked up.

PSYCHIATRIST:

Acid?

MEDFORD:

Formic, Doctor.

(takes the glass; smiles)

It may provide the jolt you need.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
27.

67 (Cont.)

The psychiatrist is puzzled, as are Graham and Ben. Medford pours acid into the bottle, then goes to the child.

68. ON CHILD AND MEDFORD

She seems oblivious to all the persons in the room - simply stares. Medford regards her a moment, then puts the glass under her nose. The child smells the formic acid. The reaction is violent. She draws back in the chair; starts screaming "Them! Them!" then runs, seeking escape. Ben picks her up and comforts her. The Woman hurries to add her comfort. The Psychiatrist, Graham and Ben look at Medford, both respectful, and puzzled. Medford and Patricia look gravely at each other.

MEDFORD:

(to Graham)

May we visit the desert now, gentlemen?

GRAHAM:

(glancing at watch)

It's pretty late, Doctor.

MEDFORD:

(nods)

Later than you think.

Medford looks at the weeping child, now in the arms of the Woman, then starts for the door. Graham looks after him, then at Patricia. He buttons his shirt collar and tightens his tie.

DISSOLVE TO:

69. EXT. DESERT ROAD

DAY (LATE)

The police car brakes to a stop at the now vacant area where the car and trailer were found. A sand storm is blowing. Graham gets out; opens rear door and helps Patricia and Medford out of the car. Ben gets out and joins them. All put on goggles. The light is fading fast with a setting sun. Medford looks excited - animated. Ben and Graham are a little annoyed.

MEDFORD:

This is where the car and trailer were?

BEN:

(nods)

Yeah. The print was found over there. But I don't know what you expect to find now. The sand'll cover up everything.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
28.

69 (Cont.)

MEDFORD:

Mmm. Or uncover it. And where is the store?

BEN:

(points)

Twelve miles - that way.

MEDFORD:

(scans landscape)

Has there been any report of a strange mound?...a cone-shaped structure?...Something recently formed?

BEN:

(looks at Graham)

Nooo...

Graham shrugs, shakes his head. He glances at Patricia who has left the group and is walking over the area where the print was found. In b.g. is a large dune or rock. She stops and looks about.

PATRICIA:

(to Medford)

Rather slim pickings for food, Dad. They'd turn carnivorous for lack of habitual diet.

Medford grunts and nods agreement. He is wandering on his own now, looking at the terrain, searching the ground. Graham and Ben glance at each other, impatience growing in them again. Graham moves to Patricia.

GRAHAM:

What would turn carnivorous?

PATRICIA:

(nods at Medford)

He'll tell you.

GRAHAM:

When?

PATRICIA:

When he's positive.

GRAHAM:

Look, Miss..."Doctor"...I...

PATRICIA:

(smiles)

If the doctor bothers you - call me Pat.

Graham has started to loosen his tie. Now he smiles and tightens it instead.

GRAHAM:

I'd like to.

(CONTINUED)

69 (Cont.1)

GRAHAM: (Cont.)

(seriously)

But I've got a job to do and I've got enough
mystery on my hands already without that old...
your father complicating things further.

PATRICIA:

That old man - as you started to call him - is
one of the world's greatest myrmecologists.

GRAHAM:

Myrme...

(tightly)

That's what I mean! Why don't we all speak
English? That'd give us some starting basis
for an understanding and....

MEDFORD'S VOICE:

(o.s. - interrupts)

Pat! Pat! Come here!

They both look o.s.

70. ANOTHER ANGLE

In f.g. Medford is kneeling excitedly on the leaside of
a Joshua tree. Ben stands beside him. Graham and Patricia
are coming up from b.g. Medford hastily takes a folding
rule from a pocket. As Patricia comes up, he points at the
ground:

MEDFORD:

The same kind of print! Look at it, Doctor!
It's gigantic!

Patricia kneels to observe the print.

71. CLOSE ON PRINT

The same kind as previously found. Into SHOT come Medford's
hands, measuring the diameter of the print with the rule.

72. BACK TO SCENE

Medford stares at his measurement with disbelief.

MEDFORD:

Twelve centimeters! Twelve!

PATRICIA:

(tensely)

That would make the entire...

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/4/53
30.

72 (Cont.)

MEDFORD:

(excitedly)

About two and a half meters in length - over eight feet! See if there are more....

(looks at Ben and Graham)

...this is monstrous!

BEN:

So's the disappearance and murder of five people.

During following, Patricia rises and, searching the ground for more prints, exits the scene. Graham and Ben remain with Medford. He now rises and pockets the rule.

MEDFORD:

The direction of this print would indicate it came from that way.

(he points)

73. ANOTHER ANGLE

The three men are in f.g. looking towards b.g. Nothing but the empty waste of desert. No sign of life. Medford turns to Graham.

MEDFORD:

(continuing)

Let's visit the store now. Perhaps we'll find more there.

GRAHAM:

(impatiently)

Listen, Doctor Medford - before we do any more visiting any place - I want to know what this "it" is.

MEDFORD:

Gentlemen, I understand your impatience. I know you two are concerned with solving what is essentially a local crime, but please believe me - I am not being coy with you. If I am wrong in my assumptions, then no harm has been done. If I am correct - and the mounting evidence only fortifies my theory - then something incredible has happened in this desert - in which case, none of us will dare risk revealing it because none of us can risk a nation-wide panic.

Graham and Ben glance at each other, then stare at Medford.

GRAHAM:

(almost to himself)

Panic?

74. ON PATRICIA

She is at the base of a large dune. Sand swirls across the top of the dune. In the lee of the dune, it is comparatively protected. She bends to examine something on the ground; another print. Into frame ENTER two slender, articulated antennae - searching, feeling. They are shiny black and the ends contain long, fine hairs. The tips reach toward her. She is unaware of them. She rises and looks to one side, seeking more prints. The tips draw back, then reach again. They touch her. She turns; stares up, eyes widening with horror.

75. CLOSE ON GIANT ANT

A head so huge it fills the entire screen - the antennae reaching out over audience. There is hair atop its rather serrate-surfaced head. The compound eyes gleam wickedly. The long, curved, vicious mandibles slowly spread wide apart, revealing the hairy, complicated mouth parts. Suddenly the head lurches forward and the mandibles snap closed. We HEAR Patricia's terrified scream o.s.

76. FLASH SHOTS ON MEN

- A. Graham turns, eyes widening.
- B. Ben reacts with disbelief and horror.
- C. Medford looks off at the giant ant with excited interest.

77. ON ANT WITH PATRICIA IN F.G.

The ant stands atop the mound, its antennae feverishly feeling for Patricia - its mandibles opening again. The lower joints of the legs are very hairy and more hair, though sparser, is on the thorax and abdomen. Patricia starts to run and falls in a gully.

78. CLOSE ON ANT

It starts after Patricia.

79. ON BEN AND GRAHAM

They race towards Patricia, drawing guns. The ant, pursuing Patricia, appears in f.g. The men start shooting. CAMERA PANS with Graham as he veers off to rescue Patricia, shooting as he runs. He reaches her.

80. FROM VIEWPOINT OF PATRICIA AND GRAHAM

The ant is approaching, mandibles open. Ben and Medford are

(CONTINUED)

80 (Cont.)

in the SHOT, off to one side.

MEDFORD:

The antennae! Get the antennae!

Ben aims carefully and empties his revolver, cutting down one antennae. He throws his revolver aside, turns, and runs for the car. The ant hesitates, shaking its head, much like any wounded beast.

MEDFORD:

(shouts at Graham)

The other antenna! Get the other one! He's helpless without them!

81. ANGLE OVER ANT

As it continues on, moving closer to Graham and Patricia. Graham aims carefully at the moving target and empties his revolver. The remaining antenna drops.

82. ON ANT

The monster is wobbly now that his sense of direction, smell, sound, and sight are gone. In b.g. we SEE Ben running up with a tommy gun. He aims and starts blasting at the ant.

83. CLOSE ON ANT

as the rounds from the tommy gun smack into it. Suddenly its legs collapse and the beast goes down. The firing stops.

84. ON PATRICIA AND GRAHAM

He helps her to her feet. They start out of the gully towards the fallen monster.

85. FULL SHOT ON PEOPLE AND ANT

As they approach and observe the creature. Ben alerts the tommy gun but doesn't fire as there is a motion from the ant's back legs and we HEAR the shrill noise of stridulation. The people wince at the sound.

86. ANOTHER ANGLE

The stridulation stops and the ant relaxes, dead. Cautiously Graham and Ben move closer to the monster. Medford and

(CONTINUED)

86 (Cont.)

Patricia move up for a closer look. Slowly, the big mandibles open and remain opened. One leg stiffens. Movement then stops.

BEN:

(shaken)

Is it -- is it what I think it is?

MEDFORD:

One of the family Formicidae - an ant. Species appears to be Camponotus Vicinus.

GRAHAM:

(almost to himself)

I can't believe it. It's not possible....

BEN:

(winces)

This is what got Ed Blackburn? And Gramps and - the others?

Medford is busily inspecting the ant, fascinated by it.

PATRICIA:

(nods)

Yes. A fantastic mutation - probably caused by lingering radiation from the first atomic bomb. Notice its odor?

GRAHAM:

Formic acid?....That's why the little girl reacted so violently!

BEN:

And the coroner's report said Gramps Johnson was filled with the stuff.

Medford points out the huge stinger of the ant.

MEDFORD:

Do you see that? It's the stinger. Ants use their mandibles to rend, tear and hold their victims but they kill with that - by injecting formic acid. Mr. Johnson was stung to death.

(looks o.s.)

There's no time to lose - we must find the colony - the nest.

BEN:

(aghast)

There - there're more of them?

Medford doesn't reply. He's busy scanning the landscape.

PATRICIA:

This was probably just a scout - foraging for
(CONTINUED).

lb
hb

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
34.

86 (Cont.1)

PATRICIA: (Cont.)

food. You heard the sound - the stridulation...
it communicated with others in the colony.

GRAHAM:

Communicate? They send messages?

MEDFORD:

Of course. All insects have means of communication
with their own kind. I...

SHOT

He breaks off as from far away comes the stridulation noise.
It varies in frequency, then dies out. There is silence...

MEDFORD:

We may be witnesses to a Biblical prophecy come
true...

They stare at him. He looks at the dead ant. CAMERA MOVES IN
CLOSE ON him, as;

MEDFORD:

(continuing)

"And there shall be destruction and darkness come
upon creation...and the beast shall reign over the
earth."

DISSOLVE TO:

87. EXT. NEW MEXICO DESERT

DAY

SHOT

An Air Force helicopter is proceeding slowly above the desert.

88. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

DAY

Flying the helicopter is Brigadier General O'BRIEN, an alert
young-looking 50 year old with fine command presence. Passengers
are Ben and Medford. They are scanning the desert below.

NEW
SCENE

O'BRIEN:

This nest we're looking for, Doctor - how many of
these giant ants do you think will be in it?

MEDFORD:

Well, General, I don't really know. If they follow
the usual pattern of their species the nest - de-
pending upon its age - may contain from several
hundred to several thousand.

BEN:

(startled)

Several thousand?

O'Brien turns and looks at Medford.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
35.

88 (Cont.).

O'BRIEN:

Doctor...

(Medford looks at him)

If we run into thousands of what you killed last night it'll take several bomber squadrons plus an infantry regiment to mop up after us. How do you propose to keep that a secret?

MEDFORD:

You're jumping to conclusions, General O'Brien. There may not be nearly so many of the creatures as you suppose.

O'BRIEN:

(tends to his flying)

I'm not supposing anything after seeing that carcass. I still can't understand why nobody has seen them until now.

MEDFORD:

Well, for one reason, I don't believe these creatures developed until recently. For another...

(indicates desert)

...their being here in some hundreds of thousands of square miles of desert...

(looks o.s. with interest; shakes head)

No, that isn't it...uh, could I please speak to my daughter?

O'Brien passes back the headset and mike. Ben starts to adjust it on Medford. He starts talking immediately.

MEDFORD:

Pat?...Pat...? Are you there?

88A. OMITTED.

88B. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS) DAY

Major KIBBEE, flying helicopter, hands mike and headset back to Patricia, who sits beside Graham.

PATRICIA:

Medford in Baker to Medford in Able. Go ahead, Dad. Over.

SHOT

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
10/13/53
36.

88C. INT. SECOND HELICOPTER (PROCESS) DAY

ADDED
SCENE

MEDFORD:
(excitedly)
Have you found anything yet?
(pauses: Ben nudges him)
What?

BEN:
Say "over" again.

MEDFORD:
This is nonsense.
(shouts)
Over!

88D. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS) DAY

ADDED
SCENE

PATRICIA:
Baker to Able. Not yet. We're about three quarters
of the way across our sector...
(Kibbee points at lap map)
We're now at coordinate Charlie Six...Over.

88E. INT. SECOND HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

ADDED
SCENE

MEDFORD:
Don't pass up any possibilities. Let me know the
moment you find anything.
He takes off headset and microphone.

BEN:
Say "over and out" if you're finished.

MEDFORD:
(exasperated)
She knows I'm through talking!

BEN:
I don't care! You have to say it. It's a rule.
Right, General?

O'BRIEN:
Right, Sergeant.

MEDFORD:
This is ridiculous!

Ben takes the microphone and headset away from him.

MEDFORD:
A lot of good your rules are going to do if we don't
locate that ---

BEN:
(into mike)
Over and out!

Medford and Ben glare at each other. Ben hands microphone and
headset back to O'Brien.

"THEY!!"
FINAL

CHANGE
10/13/53
37.

SCENE
NUMBER
CHANGED

88F. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS) DAY

Kibbee takes microphone and headset back from Patricia. He grins.

KIBBEE:

Real calm fella, isn't he?

Patricia smiles slightly, then frowns. Graham notices it.

GRAHAM:

Worried about him?

PATRICIA:

A little. He's not a young man. He shouldn't really have made this trip but...he's a scientist and this is a scientist's dream come true.

GRAHAM:

For you too, I suppose?

(she smiles and watches the terrain
below)

Uh...whatever made you become an entomologist?

PATRICIA:

(gives him a side-look)

Why not?

GRAHAM:

Well...girls and bugs. They're not supposed to get along well.

PATRICIA:

(smiles)

I grew up in laboratories full of bugs. It never occurred to me to be anything but an entomologist.

GRAHAM:

You know - there are times when I have great hopes for you.

PATRICIA:

For me or - for you?

GRAHAM:

Like yesterday - when you screamed. You were as feminine as you look.

PATRICIA:

It's an unalterable arrangement I have with me.

GRAHAM:

I like it - a lot.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
10/13/53
38.

88F (Cont.)

SCENE
NUMBER
CHANGED

PATRICIA:

I don't mind it either.

GRAHAM:

Uh...suppose you could get as interested in a man as in a bug?

PATRICIA:

I've found some even slightly more interesting than bugs.

GRAHAM:

Oh?

PATRICIA:

Don't act so surprised, Mr. Graham. I haven't spent all my time in a laboratory.

GRAHAM:

Yes, well! Why don't we shake pappa tonight and I'll tell you the story of my life. You'll find it fascinating.

PATRICIA:

(gives him the eyes)

It's possible...

KIBBEE:

(dryly)

Tell 'er now. If you'll let me know what we're lookin' for, I'll ring a bell when we come to it.

Patricia reacts alertly to something she sees o.s.

89. FROM HELICOPTER VIEWPOINT

They are approaching a ridge of a hill. The desert beyond begins to appear. Gradually revealed is a doughnut-shaped mound on the desert floor ahead.

PATRICIA'S VOICE:

(o.s.)

You won't have to.

90. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

KIBBEE:

(stares at mound o.s.)

I never saw anything like that before.

Patricia and Graham study the o.s. mound with interest.

91. ANGLE FROM GROUND

The nest is in the f.g. Helicopter approaches it and is PANNED across the nest. Nest disappears from frame and we SEE the helicopter start to turn.

92. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

The three people study the nest below intently. They react as

93. FROM HELICOPTER VIEWPOINT

The head of a giant ant is emerging from the hole. Its antennae move - feeling upwards for the aircraft.

94. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

Kibbee stares dumb-founded at the nest o.s. Patricia nudges him:

PATRICIA:

(tensely)

Fly across it again.

He manipulates the controls.

95. ANGLE FROM GROUND

CAMERA PANS helicopter as it flies across the nest in the f.g. The ant is further out of the hole now. As CAMERA STAYS with helicopter, we lose view of ant and nest. The helicopter turns and hovers.

96. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)...

The three are awed by the sight o.s:

KIBBEE:

What - what is it?

PATRICIA:

An ant.

(to Graham)

Hand me the camera. I want pictures.

Graham passes her a Stereo-Realist. Kibbee points at nest o.s.

97. FROM HELICOPTER VIEWPOINT

One ant is fully out of the nest now. A second has thrust its head out of the hole. Both move their antennae at the helicopter.

98. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

Pat is sighting through the camera finder. She shakes her head.

PATRICIA:

Get closer.

Kibbee puts the helicopter into movement again.

99. ANGLE FROM GROUND

PAN WITH helicopter as it crosses the nest. In f.g. the second ant comes out of hole TOWARD CAMERA. Hold on this and, as helicopter moves away from nest, PAN with aircraft and lose view of nest and ants. Antennae of both ants are busy.

100. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

Patricia is shooting pictures fast. Graham watches the next o.s. - suddenly reacts with even more interest - strains to see.

101. VIEWPOINT FROM HELICOPTER

Two ants stand atop the nest, one on either side of the hole. A third ant is thrusting its head up through the hole. It holds something in its mandibles.

102. ANGLE ON GROUND CLOSE ON THIRD ANT

as it comes further out of the hole. In its mandibles is a human skull.

103. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

Patricia lowers the camera as she, Graham, and Kibbee watch the ants o.s. with great intensity.

104. VIEWPOINT FROM HELICOPTER

The three ants are fully out of the hole. The ant holding the skull stands between the other two.

105. CLOSE ON THIRD ANT

as it opens its mandibles and drops the human skull. CAMERAS PANS with skull as it rolls down the side of the nest and finally rolls to a stop amidst three other skulls, one of which is a child's. The skulls lie amid personal effects - Blackburn's Sam Browne belt; a remnant of his uniform; a woman's nightdress; torn clothing of a man and little boy. AND several dead ants.

106. INT. HELICOPTER (PROCESS)

Graham and Kibbee are stunned by what they've seen.

GRAHAM:

That was a human skull!

PATRICIA:

(looks at him compassionately)

You've found your missing persons.

107. ANGLE FROM GROUND

The three ants are in the f.g., their antennae tracking the moving helicopter. The stridulation noise begins and the CAMERA PANS with the helicopter, as we

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

108. INT. F.B.I.OFFICE

NIGHT

Present are Patricia, Medford, Ben, Graham, Kibbee and Brigadier General O'Brien, who is doggedly arguing with Medford.

DIALOGUE
CHANGES

O'BRIEN:

Look, Doctor Medford, you're being very inconsistent about this. First you insist that it's top secret -- nobody else is to know or do anything about getting rid of these big ants except Major Kibbee and me -- and you others.

MEDFORD:

That's correct, General O'Brien. Absolute secrecy is imperative!

O'BRIEN:

All right! But then you turn around and say time is the most important factor.

(Medford nods agreement)

I've been instructed to take orders from you -- give you whatever you ask for - but if time is that important - why don't you let me go in there tonight with some bombers and wipe out that nest?!

MEDFORD:

If you'll just calm down, General, I'll explain.

(to Patricia)

Doctor, please put up that chart.

(to O'Brien)

Time is important - more so than you realize - but bombing that nest tonight would only aggravate our problem. The reason none of them have been seen during the day - even by the police spotting planes - is because they don't like the heat of the desert. They forage only between sunset and dawn, when it's cool. So half the colony wouldn't even be inside the nest tonight. Our best chance will be during the hottest part of the day tomorrow.

During this Patricia and Graham have hung a large rolled chart on a wall. Pulled down, like a window-shade, it illustrates a typical ant nest. Drawing is in bold, poster-like technique.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/6/53
42.

108 (Cont.)

MEDFORD:

(moving to chart)

This illustrates a typical ant nest. Observe the details.

109. CLOSE ON CHART

Medford's hand points out details as he speaks.

MEDFORD'S VOICE:

(o.s.)

Here is the entrance...these are tunnels and corridors...food chambers...note the wonderful and intricate engineering...water traps so none will drown during rains...

110. ANOTHER ANGLE

as the group watches Medford and the chart with interest.

MEDFORD:

(continuing)

This is rather over-simplified, but it will give you an idea of what we're up against. Some species of desert ants dig down as deep as thirty feet and more.

GRAHAM:

Then the nest we found today might go down hundreds of feet.

O'BRIEN:

We can pin point that opening in the top - seal it up for good.

MEDFORD:

(using chart)

The creatures would only tunnel out somewhere else, and we don't want the nest damaged - not yet.

GRAHAM:

Then what do we do?

MEDFORD:

First, we wait until noon tomorrow. By then, all of them should be within the nest. To keep them confined in there is the next problem. We have two possibilities - the first would be to flood the nest! Ants will not come through deep water. They breathe through their sides, you know.

BEN:

There's no water line within twenty miles of that place.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/6/53
43

110 (Cont.)

O'BRIEN:

So that's why you asked me to check our meteorological station?

MEDFORD:

Is there any chance of our getting cloud formations tomorrow?

O'BRIEN:

Nothing that would make cloud seeding pay off. Nobody's had much luck making rain in this part of the desert anyway - even under good conditions ... what's the second possibility?

MEDFORD:

Heat. Enough heat to drive the ants deeper down into the nest and hold them down for a while.

KIBBEE:

No bombing, huh?

(Medford shakes head; to O'Brien)

How about phosphorus? We could lay it all over that mound with bazookas.

O'BRIEN:

(nods; to Medford)

That'd keep the surface area hot all right; but what happens after that?

MEDFORD:

We then drop cyanide gas into the opening and kill them.

O'BRIEN:

How are you going to be sure you get all of them?

MEDFORD:

We go into the nest and find out.

Graham takes a deep breath, unloosens his tie and looks at Patricia. She is the only one who isn't staring at Medford as if he'd gone mad.

DISSOLVE THRU
TO:

111. EXT. THE DESERT AND NEST

DAY

LONG SHOT with ant nest in middle distance, looming ominously from the desert floor. No activity or signs of

(CONTINUED)

1b
ef

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
10/23/53
44.

111 (Cont.)

life around it. It is brilliantly hot - we can almost smell the desert heat. In f.g., standing on higher ground, beside two jeeps with tarp-covered jeep-trailers, are Patricia and Medford, watching.

112. ANGLE ON KIBBEE AND BEN

Kibbee and Ben are aiming bazookas. Graham and O'Brien are acting as loaders. The nest is in b.g. Graham taps Kibbee and steps aside. Kibbee fires and we see the phosphorus rocket burst on the top of the nest.

113. ANGLE TOWARD BAZOOKA

O'Brien gingerly handles a rocket, trying to remember the standard operating procedure in loading. Ben glances at him:

DIALOGUE
ADDED

BEN:

Be sure you give me a tap after you get it wired.

O'BRIEN:

Don't rush me. I'm working out of the book. This is the first time I've ever loaded one of these things.

BEN:

That makes us even. This is the first time I've ever given orders to a General.

O'Brien taps Ben; steps aside. Ben aims at CAMERA. Flash occludes frame.

114. AT NEST

as a rocket bursts in immediate f.g.

115. ON MEDFORD AND PATRICIA

reacting to sight of the rocket bursts.

116. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

The ant nest is being ringed with phosphorus. The top of the crater and its sides are being turned into flames. We SEE two more white bursts of phosphorus.

117. ON KIBBEE AND BEN DIFFERENT LOCATION

as, accompanied by O'Brien and Graham, they move into a new position. They load and fire.

118. ON MEDFORD AND PATRICIA

Medford closes his eyes momentarily and, weaving slightly, presses a hand against his forehead.

(CONTINUED)

118 (Cont.)

PATRICIA:
(concerned)

Dad!

MEDFORD:
I'm all right. It's the sun.

He looks off at the nest.

119. ANGLE ON THE NEST

as more phosphorus bursts. The entire crater is a mass of flames now.

120. ANOTHER ANGLE

O'Brien, Kibbee, Ben and Graham, carrying the bazookas, come climbing up to Medford and Patricia. They look at the burning nest in the b.g.

O'BRIEN:
That ought to do it, Doctor. In about an hour it'll be ready for the gas.

Medford nods, satisfied.

121. ON NEST

Its top and sides a mass of flames, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

122. EXT. THE NEST LONG SHOT

DAY (LATER)

The phosphorus has nearly burned itself out. The nest is scorched; smoking hot; spots of flame still show. Parked a short distance from the bottom of the nest are the two jeeps and trailers. O'Brien, Medford and Patricia sit in one jeep, watching two figures in asbestos suits climbing towards the top of the crater. Each climber has a canvas bag of grenades slung on his back, plus a tommy gun. The going is not easy. The ground is very hot and the men circle around spots of flame.

123. ANGLE ON CLIMBERS

as they climb towards CAMERA, pausing as they crawl into a TWO SHOT. Through the visored hoods we recognize the sweating faces of Graham and Ben. In b.g. on the desert floor below, we see the jeeps and trailers. Graham and Ben readjust their gear and resume climbing.

124. GROUP SHOT PATRICIA, MEDFORD, O'BRIEN

watching the climbers o.s. O'Brien squirms.

O'BRIEN:

Should've waited for that hill to cool a little more.

MEDFORD:

We don't dare lose time getting cyanide into the nest.

125. ON TOP OF NEST

as Graham and Ben reach the top. They are awed by the sight and both lift their hoods to see better. Their faces are covered with perspiration from the heat and the climb.

126. THEIR VIEWPOINT

The top of the nest is immense, perhaps fifty feet or more across. The entrance hole in the center is at least fifteen feet in diameter. No sign of life. A few spots of flame left - the rest of the surface smoking.

127. ON GRAHAM AND BEN

Ben looks at the entrance hole. His jaw sets as he unslings the tommy gun. He cocks it and starts for the opening - a man anxious to close with an enemy. Graham restrains him briefly:

GRAHAM:

Let's not be heroes...easy does it.
(starts for entrance)

Cover me.

Graham unslings the canvas pouch and takes out a grenade as he cautiously approaches the entrance. Ben moves with him. Graham crouches and peers down into the black hole.

128. INT. NEST ANGLE TOWARDS OPENING

We SEE Graham and Ben looking down at us. Suddenly, in f.g. a giant ant appears, struggling toward the opening above, moving savagely but as if sorely hurt.

129. ON MEN

as they react to sight of the monster below. Ben raises the tommy gun. Graham checks him with a gesture and pulls the pin on the grenade. He lets it smoke a moment, then drops it into the hole.

130. INT. NEST ANGLE TOWARDS OPENING

as Graham, seen in opening above, drops the grenade. It leaves a thin trail of smoke and bursts with a slight "poof" almost on the ant's head. Gas fumes becloud the frame. Dimly, we see the ant shake its head, then it drops, dead, and falls out of frame. Through the fumes and smoke we see Graham start throwing one grenade after another. The frame is clouded with fumes and smoke, as we -

DISSOLVE TO:

131. EXT. TOP OF NEST

DAY (LATER)

The flames have died down and all of the smoke is gone. A jeep and trailer are parked at the edge of the scorched nest. Ben is unloading equipment from the trailer - ropes, rope ladders, iron spikes, electric lanterns, stuff germane to climbing needs. Graham is attaching a rope ladder to a large iron spike that has been driven into the ground near the nest opening. Medford is peering down into the entrance hole, using a strong electric torch as he tries to see. He wears asbestos boots. Graham and Ben are still in asbestos suits but wear crampons on theirs.

MEDFORD:

Marvelously made - marvelously!...You only saw the one live ant?

GRAHAM:

Yeah...seemed to be trying to get out rather than get us. It stopped moving almost as soon as the gas hit it. Then it dropped out of sight. We didn't hear or see a thing from then on.

Medford grunts. Graham drops rope ladder down hole.

132. INT. NEST. ANGLE TOWARD OPENING

as rope ladder falls towards CAMERA.

133. EXT. TOP OF NEST

Graham and Medford are looking down the hole as Ben comes up and adds the final supplies to the pile.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/6/53
48.

133 (Cont.)

BEN:

Think they're all dead in there, Doctor?

MEDFORD:

I think so. You used enough gas. All parts of the nest should've been well-saturated by now.

Graham has started helping harness the flame-thrower on Ben.

GRAHAM:

(drily)

If I'm able to raise an arm after we get through here, I'm going to show you how well-saturated I can get.

(as Ben examines nozzle and trigger mechanism of flame-thrower)

You know how to work this thing?

Ben squirts a jet of flame; looks wryly at Graham.

BEN:

I'll go first.

He slings on an electric torch; grasps the rope ladder and starts to lower himself down into the hole. He pauses and looks off at the SOUND of the other jeep arriving.

134. ANOTHER ANGLE

O'Brien has driven the other jeep and trailer up over the edge of the nest. Seated beside him is Patricia. She now wears an asbestos suit; around her neck hang two Stereo-Realist cameras, and she carries strobe flash equipment. As she gets out and comes towards the entrance hole, Graham moves to meet her - startled at her appearance.

GRAHAM:

What're you made up for?

PATRICIA:

(calmly)

I'm going with you and Ben.

GRAHAM:

(reaches for cameras)

Oh, no, you're not. We'll take pictures of everything for you.

(as she draws back; to Medford)

What is this?

PATRICIA:

Someone with scientific knowledge has to go. My father is physically unable to do it. That leaves me.

(CONTINUED)

134 (Cont.)

GRAHAM:

That leaves you here! We don't know what we'll find down there or what'll happen! One thing for sure - it's no place for you or any other woman!

MEDFORD:

I didn't ask her to go, Robert. She wanted to. Being a scientist myself - I couldn't very well forbid her.

PATRICIA:

(insistently)

A trained observer has to go into the nest.

GRAHAM:

What for?

PATRICIA:

There are more important things to find out than whether all the ants are dead. You wouldn't know what to look for.

GRAHAM:

Tell us what to look for! We...

PATRICIA:

(losing her temper too)

Bob - there's no time to give you a fast course in insect pathology! So let's stop the talk and get on with it!

(turns to Medford)

Don't worry, Dad!

She kisses Medford's cheek and turns to the entrance. She gestures at Ben to start down. He looks at Graham, then disappears down the hole. Graham, exasperated, takes grenades from a box labeled "grenades Thermite" and hooks them on his suspenders.

O'BRIEN:

(to Ben)

Good luck, Sergeant.

Patricia starts to follow Ben. Graham pulls her aside - a touch roughly.

GRAHAM:

You come last.

(to Medford and O'Brien)

Drop the rest of this stuff down when I signal.

(swings onto rope ladder; starts down; pauses; looks at Medford)

And I think letting her go really stinks, Mister Scientist.

He disappears down the hole. Patricia smiles a bit wanly at her father and O'Brien, then follows - if not eagerly, at

(CONTINUED)

134 (Cont.1)

least determinedly. As she disappears down the hole, Medford and O'Brien look over the edge to watch.

MEDFORD:

Mr. Graham will never make a scientist. He lacks the impersonal viewpoint.

135. INT. NEST ANGLE TOWARDS OPENING

Ben is nearest CAMERA, coming towards and past CAMERA as he climbs down the rope ladder; then comes Graham, then Patricia. At opening far above we see Medford and O'Brien looking down at them.

(NOTE: SEQUENCE FOLLOWING IS ALL WITHIN NEST. SHAFTS WILL BE DESIGNATED AS "HORIZONTAL"... "VERTICAL")

136. HORIZONTAL SHAFT

The rope ladder ends as the vertical shaft meets this horizontal shaft. Ben stands, flame-thrower ready and electric torch turned on. The torch hangs around his neck, throwing a strong beam in whatever direction he turns. Graham enters from top of frame climbing down ladder. He moves up behind Ben.

GRAHAM:

Anything?

Ben shakes his head.

137. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

The shaft of light shoots along the horizontal tunnel which turns off into blackness. No sign of ants.

138. ON PRINCIPALS

as Graham turns back to help Patricia off the rope ladder. She moves up behind Ben. Graham calls up the vertical shaft.

GRAHAM:

Okay - drop the stuff!

He steps back. He looks at Patricia. She stands beside Ben and is making a flash shot of the tunnel. Coils of rope drop from the vertical shaft. Graham hangs a coil over the flame-thrower on Ben's back; he glances at Patricia as she comes to him.

PATRICIA:

I can carry some, too.

(CONTINUED)

138 (Cont.)

Graham nods and hangs coils from each of her shoulders. He shoulders the rest and nods at Ben. Ben starts slowly along the shaft. Graham detains Patricia, pulling her back so she is behind him. The three start moving toward the bend ahead. As Ben moves around the bend he comes to a startled halt. Graham adds his torch to Ben's. Patricia strains to see.

139. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

A dead ant lies facing them, mandibles open, legs almost blocking the tunnel.

140. ON PEOPLE

as they look at the ant.

BEN:

Looks dead.

PATRICIA:

It is or it would've attacked us right away.

Ben moves up to the ant. He nudges one of the legs with the nozzle of the flame-thrower. No reaction. The group starts past the ant, clambering gingerly over the hairy legs of the monster.

141. ON GRAHAM AND PATRICIA

He watches as she climbs over one of the creature's legs. She can't suppress a shudder.

GRAHAM:

Glad you came along?

He doesn't wait for a reply. He can't suppress a shudder either.

DISSOLVE TO:

142. HORIZONTAL SHAFT

We see the flashlights approaching, lighting a yawning hole in the f.g. The three stop at the edge of it.

143. ANOTHER ANGLE

Graham flashes his light down into the hole and sniffs carefully. In b.g. Patricia is flashing her light on the walls of tightly packed sand. Graham picks up a pebble and drops it into the hole. We HEAR it hit and roll. Ben and Graham look at each other.

(CONTINUED)

143 (Cont.)

BEN:
About thirty feet?

GRAHAM:
(sniffs)
We'd better put on our masks - just in case.

He pulls out his gas mask and turns to Patricia. She smiles brightly at him and points at the wall.

PATRICIA:
Look - held together with saliva.

GRAHAM:
(dryly)
Spit is all that's holdin' me together, too.

He selects an iron piton and, with a rock hammer begins to drive it into the ground, as we

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

144. VERTICAL SHAFT

Ben lowers himself down the shaft and on out of the frame. Then comes Graham. As he disappears, Patricia follows. All wear gas masks.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

145. HORIZONTAL SHAFT

The three masked people move cautiously down the shaft, the lights bobbing and casting weird shadows. Suddenly Ben, in the lead, halts and puts up a warning hand. They stop. From c.s. we HEAR a digging sound. Graham moves alongside Ben and adds his beam of light.

146. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

Further ahead, the shaft turns. Almost at the turn we see some earth movement. It appears something has caved in. Live ants are working behind this earth. Suddenly, a sizeable chunk of the wall falls forward and we SEE the head of a giant ant, using its mandibles to tear at the wall.

147. ON PEOPLE

Ben quickly moves forward, aims the nozzle, and squirts flame at the opening.

148. REVERSE ANGLE

as jet of flame squirts directly at CAMERA.

149. ON PEOPLE

Ben gives the opening another final, long burst of flame. Graham casts off the coils of rope and pulls a grenade from his suspenders. Now he pulls the pin, goes to the opening and throws the thermite bomb into the opening. The three all pull back. The grenade bursts and the opening glows fiercely with a blinding white light. We HEAR the threshing of the beasts inside - the crackling as their hides split. Without intent, Graham puts an arm around Patricia and she hangs close to him. As the fire inside the hole fades a bit, Graham, ready with another grenade, moves carefully to the entrance and peers in.

150. ON GRAHAM

His face is lighted by the burning thermite. His eyes flick with revulsion from one place to another. Patricia appears beside him.

151. THEIR VIEWPOINT

A small chamber that has caved in in parts. Several ants are afire and dying or dead.

152. ON PEOPLE

GRAHAM:

How come the gas didn't knock 'em off?

PATRICIA:

The chamber looked caved-in. Maybe from the first bombing. Sealed up that way, the gas couldn't reach them.

GRAHAM:

(considers this)

We hit any more lives ones -- science or no science - we're gettin' out of here...

He re-shoulders the coils of rope he dropped, nods at Ben, and the three start moving ahead again, passing the opening that now glows like a dying furnace.

DISSOLVE TO:

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
9/23/53
54.

153. HORIZONTAL SHAFT

In the b.g. we see the three bobbing lights approaching. Finally we discern Ben, still in the lead. He stops and leans wearily against the wall. He is sweating profusely. Graham looks ahead, then looks back at Patricia. She's leaning against the wall, too.

PATRICIA:

How far down are we?

GRAHAM:

About six hundred feet.

PATRICIA:

(straightens)

We have to find the bottom - the queen's chamber will be there.

They start again, as we -

DISSOLVE TO:

154. HORIZONTAL SHAFT

The three are moving past another dead ant. As they clear it, Ben stops and points ahead.

155. FROM THEIR ANGLE

We see a yawning cavern with an entrance about ten or twelve feet high. Their lights pierce the darkness within only partially. Graham looks at Patricia.

PATRICIA:

(tentatively)

We're down far enough...and that's the biggest of the chambers so far...

Graham looks at the chamber, then, with finality:

GRAHAM:

Okay, Ben - let's take a look.

(to Patricia)

Stay behind us until I tell you it's okay.

The two start away. She holds on to Graham suddenly.

PATRICIA:

Bob....? Be careful.

He looks at her a moment, then grins. He pats her cheek, turns and moves toward the cavern with Ben. They enter cautiously. Patricia watches tensely.

BUSINESS
CHANGE

156. INT. CHAMBER

In the fitful illumination of the electric torches, we can see the chamber is a large, vaulted cavern, with smooth sides. Graham and Ben are making their way carefully when suddenly Graham grabs Ben's arm and points to something ahead. Both men stare.

157. FROM THEIR ANGLE

There are several dead ants - each with a large white object held in its mandibles. The lights move around revealing more ants -- each holding a large, round white object.

158. ON GRAHAM AND BEN

as they look at each other, puzzled.

BEN:

What're they holding?

Graham shakes his head -- he doesn't know. Both men start forward. They make their way cautiously around the huge dead creatures. Ben stops -- carefully, he prods one of the ants. One of its legs straightens in a convulsive gesture and both men jump backward. They glance at each other with rather wan, shame-faced smiles -- then continue forward. Now they come upon something which brings them up short. They play the light from their torches over:

159. FULL SHOT THE EGGS OF THE ANTS

These are lying in a mass. Each egg is as big around as a barrel; cocoon-like in structure; of a sickly white hue; and slightly patterned - waffle-like. They are a totally unlovely sight -- horrible in their implication. They are lying at the extreme end of the chamber.

160. ON GRAHAM AND BEN

They look at the eggs -- then at each other -- disgust and loathing written on their features. Graham turns to call:

GRAHAM:

Pat!...

Both men turn their attention back to the eggs. Ben prods several of them. Patricia comes into SHOT - stares at the eggs.

GRAHAM:

This it?

(CONTINUED)

160 (Cont.)

PATRICIA:
(tightly)
Partly.

Graham and Ben look quickly at Patricia who seems to be searching for something else.

GRAHAM:
(nodding at something o.s.)
They didn't have time to eat that, I guess.

161. ANOTHER ANGLE

and we see a dead lamb lying on its side.

162. GROUP SHOT

as they regard the dead lamb.

PATRICIA:
It may have been a "guest."
(as they look at her)
That's right - a guest. Ants take other insects -
in this case - other animals - into their nests.
They don't harm a guest - they feed it - take care
of it. If the guest behaves properly and doesn't
cause any trouble, it will be perfectly safe and,
eventually, can leave at will. This lamb hasn't
been bruised. The cyanide killed it - not the ants.

GRAHAM:
(incredulously)
Now I've heard everything.

Patricia starts looking about, again searching for something.
She stops short and stares at something o.s.

GRAHAM:
What's the matter, Pat?

PATRICIA:
We're too late.

163. HER VIEWPOINT

A group of two eggs...easily twice the size of the others...and
with another difference. They're split open - are hollow -
and empty.

164. NEW ANGLE (EMPTY EGG CASES IN F.G.)

The men follow Patricia as she comes to them. These empty egg
cases have some terrifying significance to her.

(CONTINUED)

164 (Cont.)

PATRICIA:

This is what we were afraid of...they're empty.

GRAHAM:

(puzzled)

So? Whatever came out of them is dead now.

PATRICIA:

No - not the ones that hatched from these.

She takes several flash pictures of the empty eggs - shooting fast. Graham and Ben glance at each other and worriedly look about. Live ones still in the nest some place?

PATRICIA:

Now destroy everything in here! Burn it!
(note of hysteria)

Burn everything!

Graham gives her a quick close look, puzzled at her sudden tension. He unhooks his remaining grenades and gestures Patricia out of the chamber.

GRAHAM:

We'll have to make tracks getting back. The flame-thrower and thermite'll use up what's left of the oxygen down here.

The three reach the entrance of the chamber. Patricia exits. Ben turns the nozzle of the flame-thrower towards the egg mass and squirts jets of flame over them. Graham is throwing thermite into the flaming chamber, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

165. INT. F.B.I. OFFICE CLOSE ON PHOTO ENLARGEMENT NIGHT
of the two empty, oversized egg cases.

MEDFORD'S VOICE: (O.S.)

Very strange. Most unusual...

CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see Medford, sitting at the desk, observing the enlargement. Other blow-ups are on the desk. Present are Graham, Ben, O'Brien and Kibbee. Patricia sits beside the desk, her head in her arms. O'Brien and Kibbee are looking at stereo slides with hand viewers.

PATRICIA:

There were no larvae or pupae in the egg chamber. They all seemed to hatch directly from the eggs. I attribute it to part of the whole mutation process.

MEDFORD:

(nods)

That's the logical conclusion. And you feel sure these two are gone?

(CONTINUED)

165 (Cont.)

MEDFORD: (Cont.)

(Patricia nods)

You found no winged ants in the nest anywhere?

PATRICIA:

We saw only worker ants.

O'Brien puts aside the viewer and looks at Medford impatiently.

O'BRIEN:

I don't get it. You two act like it was the end of the world.

MEDFORD:

It could be.

(indicates egg photo)

Those two empty egg cases contained queen ants. You see, new-born queen ants have wings. So do their consorts - male ants.

(regards Graham and Ben)

You found no ants with wings?

GRAHAM:

No, but...

MEDFORD:

(rises)

The brutal fact is that we didn't destroy this first nest soon enough. Two young queen ants hatched out, dried their wings and flew away - each with one or more winged males. They are gone - on their wedding flight. We needn't worry about the males because they will die very quickly...but the queens....

(shrugs)

BEN:

(incredulously)

Are you sayin' there are going to be other nests?

MEDFORD:

Of course. A single queen is capable of laying thousands of eggs. From these will hatch dozens of other queens that will, in turn...

(spreads hands)

The non-scientists stare at each other a moment.

O'BRIEN:

How far can they fly?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/6/53
59.

165 (Cont.1)

MEDFORD:

(uncertainly)

These giants...I don't know. Ordinary queens of the small species have very limited flying power - they are dependent mostly on winds, thermal currents, to carry them along. They have been found in the stratosphere. With these? I don't know. You guess.

The men stare at him, stunned at the implication of what the future may hold.

GRAHAM:

And I thought today was the end of them.

MEDFORD:

No, we haven't seen the end of them. We've only had a close view of the beginning of what may be - the end of us.

(looks at O'Brien)

We'd better inform Washington, General.

O'Brien, a little pale, is reaching for the telephone, as we

FADE OUT.

PART III TO FOLLOW

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
60.

FADE IN

166. INT. CONFERENCE ROOM ON WINDOW NIGHT

Through an upper-floor window we SEE a familiar landmark of Washington, D.C. Rain beats against the window. There is a lightning flash and the crash of thunder. Graham enters and pulls down the window blind.

167. NEW ANGLE

And we see we are in a conference room. Seated on both sides of a long table are important-looking, solemn-faced government officials, including a five-starred General and Admiral. At one end of the table, Medford and Patricia are threading 16mm film into a projector. A screen has been erected. Graham draws shades to keep lightning flashes from interfering with the forthcoming projection. Most of the attention is fixed on Ben, now in civilian clothes. Seated near him are O'Brien and Major Kibbee. Ben is being questioned by one of the OFFICIALS.

OFFICIAL:

What about your superiors, Sergeant? Do they know these lethal creatures were responsible for the crimes committed in your desert?

BEN:

No, sir. Dr. Medford and General O'Brien felt absolute secrecy about the existence of the big ants was essential.

OFFICIAL:

Do you also think this extraordinary hush-hush is necessary?

BEN:

Yes, sir. I don't think there's a police force in the world that could handle the panic if people found out these babies were loose.

OFFICIAL:

Mmm. How do you explain your presence here? Aren't your superiors curious about this absence from your organization?

BEN:

(slight smile)

General O'Brien took care of that, sir.

O'BRIEN:

Peterson was in the Air Force Reserve. I simply ordered him to active duty. No questions were asked.

All give their attention to Medford as -

MEDFORD:

I believe we're ready, gentlemen.

168. ON MEDFORD

MEDFORD:

Some of you have displayed incredulous attitudes towards our reports and photographs. The rest of you are trying to understand the gravity of our situation but repeatedly ask how really serious it is. This is understandable since you have seen ants of one kind or another all your lives but, like most people, never paid much attention to them unless they became a nuisance - in which case you called for an exterminator.

169. INTERCUT ABOVE WITH

Some SHOTS of OFFICIALS: The DOUBTER: the SLIGHTLY CONTEMPTUOUS the WORRIER; the sober RESPONSIBLE type.

170. BACK TO SCENE

MEDFORD:

(continuing)

For your edification, I've put together a short film which, I hope, will give you some idea of the nature of the creatures we're up against - in a small way, of course.

(nods at Graham)

Please turn out the lights, Robert.

Graham steps to a light switch and, as Patricia nods at him, he turns off the lights and she starts the projector.

171. FROM PROJECTOR VIEWPOINT

Ant film begins. People are initially silhouetted by the projector's beam of light. CAMERA MOVES IN until live ants fill the screen. (NOTE: numbers in brackets (24) inserted in Medford's dialogue, indicate speech timing to match film).

MEDFORD: (after pause of (4))

These ants, and related species, are common to most of America. As a matter of fact, you can find them in backyards, empty lots, and fields, throughout the temperate zones of the world. They haven't changed in either form or habits for more than fifty million years. (24)

Here, for instance, is one such specimen that got himself trapped in amber which we know is at least that old. (32)

(pause (3))

Now we come to some different kinds of ants. The big fellow there, feeding on the smaller red grease-eaters is of a savage species called *Camponotus Vicinus* Mayr. He is of a desert variety, very similar to the giant mutations we found in New Mexico. (59)

(CONTINUED)

171 (Cont.)

MEDFORD: (Cont.)

Those are generally classified as "honey ants" in that they subsist almost entirely on the nectar of flowers or any other sweets they can find. (1:11)
These ants are called "Leaf Cutters," a most interesting species of the "Farmer" class - so-called because they grow their own food. Note each leaf-carrier is accompanied by a warrior whose function is to fight off any attackers. With those bits of leaves, these industrious creatures build beds of humus, beneath which they grow and cultivate mushrooms - their only food. They control the temperature of their mushroom beds more accurately than man could do. (1:43)
(pause (2))

Here is a "Harvester" ant. There are literally thousands of species of Harvesters, so identified because they are grain eaters - very destructive to crops. Incidentally, all ants are exceptionally clean creatures and their nests are always immaculate. (2:03)
Here are Harvesters entering their nest...there is a side-view of a small nest - the type that is sometimes sold in stores for ant hobbyists...the construction is not unlike that which we found in the nest in New Mexico. Those white objects are ant eggs. (2:25)
There we have some Harvesters picking up food. Ants do not see well at all. They hear, smell, and locate objects entirely with their radar-like antennae. Only after food - or an enemy - is located with the antennae are the savage mandibles put to work. (2:47)
Now, gentlemen, watch this demonstration of power. A pebble has blocked the entrance to the nest. That creature is determined to remove the obstacle. Note how the mandibles are used to grasp the pebble and finally pull it aside with only a slight assist from another ant. There is the same pebble on a laboratory scale. Balancing it is a dish containing 20 ants. We have learned that one of these quarter-inch long insects can lift 20 times its own weight! That is equal to one of you lifting a ton-and-a-half or more! (3:27)

That is a warrior ant. Some species breed these huge fellows only for fighting. Defense of the nest is their sole function. (3:37)
Here are rare shots of a new-born queen and her consorts. Technically, she should be referred to as a "princess" until after the mating flight. There is a close shot of a winged male. The males are unequipped for survival beyond the mating and die soon afterward. The queen relies on, or more precisely, is borne by the winds, until her need prompts her to seek a place to lay eggs. (4:08)

172. REVERSE SHOT

Towards Medford at projector. An OFFICIAL, watching the screen o.s. intently, half-turns to Medford with:

OFFICIAL:

Does a queen ever fly away from a nest once she's established it?

MEDFORD:

No. Never.

(points at o.s. screen)

173. ON SCREEN

MEDFORD'S VOICE:

(continuing)

She loses her wings after the wedding flight. See? One wing has already dropped off. Now she starts her function of establishing a place in which to lay her eggs and begin her nest. Queens live quite a long time. They continue to lay eggs, from the one mating, for from 15 to 17 years. (27)

Here are ants at war. This particular battle began when a nest raided a neighbor in an attempt to capture a herd of aphids - sometimes called "ant cows." Ants milk the aphids to extract the sweet juices the plant parasites have sucked from garden flowers. As you can see - ants are savage, ruthless, and courageous fighters. This fight lasted 72 hours between those two alone. Note the vanquished ant's severed head still has its mandibles clamped on the pedicel of the victor - who will die because of it. (1:01)

The film ends.

174. ON GROUP

Graham turns on the lights. People regard Medford.

MEDFORD:

Ants are the only creatures on earth, other than man, who make war. They campaign; they are chronic aggressors; and they make slave laborers out of the captives they don't kill.

(pauses)

None of the ants previously known to man were much more than an inch in length. Most are considerably under that size. But even the most minute of them possess an instinct and talent for industry and social organization - and savagery - that makes man look feeble by comparison.

FIVE STAR GENERAL:

How large were the ants you found?

(CONTINUED)

174 (Cont.)

MEDFORD:

The smallest measured nine feet in body length.

ADMIRAL:

How do you account for their extraordinary size?

Medford nods at a professorial-looking man named DR. GRANT.

MEDFORD:

Dr. Grant, a consultant on genetics for the Rockefeller Foundation, has confirmed my theory. Doctor?

DR. GRANT:

(rises)

It appears that lingering radiation from the first atomic explosion in 1945 affected the genes and chromosomes of an ant colony. Succeeding generations grew larger until the present giants appeared. These may, of course, produce even larger creatures.

FIVE STAR GENERAL:

How can you be sure it was the first bomb that did this?

DR. GRANT:

It is the only reasonable explanation. We use radiation in our genetics laboratories constantly to produce chromosome alterations - especially in fruit flies - that would seem to you to be quite as fantastic as the ants Dr. Medford has found. In controlled laboratory experiments I can produce almost any kind of fruit fly you care to order - one with three heads, four heads - one white wing, one black wing. You name it. We'll produce it.

OFFICIAL:

The solution seems very simple to me. Find these missing queens and destroy them!

MEDFORD:

(nods)

Where do you suggest we look?

OFFICIAL:

Well, uh ... you scientists - you ought to know where they went!

MEDFORD:

Perhaps but - I don't know and neither does any other entomologist. Beyond a hunch that, true to their species, the missing queens would seek a climate and environment not unlike their desert birthplace. I can offer little more of tangible value. That, gentlemen, is why you are here - to consider the problem and, I hope, solve it.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
65.

174 (Cont.)

MEDFORD: (Cont.)

(pauses)

Unless you solve it...unless those queens are located and destroyed before they've established thriving colonies and produced - heaven only knows how many more queen ants...man, as the dominant species of life on earth, will probably be extinct within, oh...

SHOT

(looks at Dr. Grant)

...nine months?

Dr. Grant nods. The officials stare at Medford and Grant, shaken by this horrendous prediction, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

175. EXT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING

DAY

NEW
SCENE

Armed MP's stand on either side of the entrance. A WAVE officer and a WAC officer pause to show credentials to the MP's, then enter the building.

NEW
SCENE

175A. ANOTHER ANGLE

At the curb, watching the building, are two reporters and a press photographer. The REPORTER nudges the NEWSMAN as he sees someone coming out of building. The photographer gets his camera and flash ready.

NEW
SCENE

175B. ON BUILDING ENTRANCE

A dignified looking SENATOR is coming out of the building. As the MP's check him out, the photographer gets a picture and the other two move in with questions.

REPORTER:

How about some information, Senator? What's goin' on inside there?

SENATOR:

Sorry, boys. No comment.

NEWSMAN:

There must be something you can tell us, Senator. I happen to know that all the news wire services - A.P., U.P., I.N.S. - all of 'em are sending their news in there but nothing is coming out - is that paper men are even being admitted. What's the story?

REPORTER:

What was that mysterious 3 AM meeting all about two days ago?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
65A

175B(Cont.)

NEW
SCENE

SENATOR:

I can't tell you a thing, boys. Sorry.

He steps into a waiting car and is driven off. The reporters look after him acidly; regard the building.

NEWSMAN:

I know they've got a zillion radio receivers installed in there, too.

REPORTER:

Why? What for?

DISSOLVE TO:

176. INT. MONITOR ROOM CLOSE ON LARGE WALL SIGN DAY

It reads:

"MONITOR ALL NEWS FOR:

1. KIDNAPPINGS & MISSING PERSONS
2. UNSOLVED MURDERS
3. ALLEGED SUICIDES
4. MIGRATIONS OF WILD LIFE
5. THEFTS OF SUGAR, SYRUPS, SWEETS
6. STRANGE PHENOMENA, SUCH AS:
 - a. FLYING SAUCERS
 - b. STRANGE ODORS
 - c. HIGH-PITCHED SOUNDS
 - d. UNNATURAL THINGS, ALIVE OR DEAD"

SHOT

CAMERA PANS DOWN to teletype machine as a SERGEANT enters and observes the copy being printed on it. He tears the copy from the machine and reads it;

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
66.

177. CLOSE ON TELETYPED COPY

In Sergeant's hands. It has a BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS, dateline and reads;

NEW
INSERT

"ALLEN CROTTY, FLYING FOREMAN OF THE LAZY K RANCH WHO WRECKED HIS SMALL PLANE HERE LAST WEEK, STILL INSISTS THE REASON HE MADE AN EMERGENCY LANDING IN A BROWNSVILLE STREET INSTEAD OF AT THE AIRPORT WAS DUE TO HIS BECOMING RATTLED AFTER SEEING WHAT HE CLAIMS WERE FLYING SAUCERS SHAPED LIKE ANTS. HE HAS BEEN MOVED TO THE PSYCHOPATHIC WARD AT MERCY HOSPITAL."

SHOT

CAMERA PULLS BACK as the copy is torn from the machine by the Sergeant. He grins at the report and is PANNED to the copy desk. As he hands the teletype to a Reader, a WAVE Lieutenant.

SERGEANT:

These Texans! Lieutenant, when bigger stories are told, Texans'll tell 'em. That oughta fit into the kinda stuff they're lookin' for upstairs.

WAVE:

(reads copy)

Anybody found out yet what's going on in this building.

SERGEANT:

Nope. Real T.S. stuff. Top secret.

The Wave selects a rubber stamp from a rack of many stamps, inks it, and stamps the report.

SHOT

178. INSERT: THE NEWS TELETYPE

As the rubber stamp pulls away from the copy we read: "STRANGE PHENOMENA - FLYING SAUCERS." HOLD on this, then -

SHOT

179. INT. CONFERENCE ROOM CLOSE ON NEWS TELETYPE DAY

CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see the report is lying on the conference table. Medford is looking at it. Ben is sticking a yellow flag into a large wall map of the United States - locating the flag at Brownsville, Texas. Patricia is just getting into her coat. Graham is on the telephone.

GRAHAM:

Okay, Kib - we'll meet you at the airport in twenty minutes.

(hangs up - to Medford)

He says he can have us in Brownsville in less than three hours, Doctor.

Medford nods and turns to look thoughtfully at the map as Graham and Patricia exit hurriedly. CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE on MAP and FLAG, as we -

DISSOLVE TO:

9/23/53

67.

180. INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Patricia, Graham and Kibbee watch the pacing of CROTTY. He is a weather-beaten Texan, about 40. He talks fast (for a Texan) and paces almost constantly, padding about in slippers and a hospital bathrobe he has to hold together since it lacks a tie or rope.

CROTTY:

They ain't kiddin' me. Nobody's kiddin' me - not you - not nobody. This is no hospital! This is a loony bin - a nut-house. Do you think I'm crazy? I don't care what you think - I'm not! I saw those things with my own two eyes. You think anybody could make up a story like that? A guy'd have to be nuts to...

(he stops; regards them suspiciously;
has he hung himself?)

I mean...

(turns to Kibbee)

Look, you're a flyer. You didn't get all that yardgoods on your chest sittin' on the ground. You've seen guys blow their corks, haven't you?

(Kibbee nods)

You think I act and talk like a guy who's lost his marbles?

KIBBEE:

(glances at Patricia and Graham)

Nope.

PATRICIA:

Won't you please tell us what you saw, Mr. Crotty?

CROTTY:

I've already told those head-shrinkin' doctors four dozen times. I'm sicka tellin' it! I tell it and then get laughed at or clucked over.

(eyes them shrewdly)

Promise not to laugh at me?

GRAHAM:

Promise.

CROTTY:

(his eyes brighten; he pauses; then:)

Okay - I was flyin' south from Corpus Christi, headed here, Brownville. I turned in from the Gulf and made for the airport about twenty miles out. All of a sudden I see these...uh...these flying saucers. Three of 'em. One big one and two littler ones. I had to do some fancy flyin' or they'd run right into me. I went into a dive and lost 'em. I set down the first place I saw. So it was a street.

(CONTINUED)

CROTTY: (Cont.)

(to Kibbee)

I never been so rattled in my life. I cracked up a little, sure - ploughed through an old Ford and ended up on somebody's front porch - but who wouldn't lose his head a little after seein' somethin' like that?

PATRICIA:

They were flying saucers?

CROTTY:

I don't know what else to call 'em. They were shaped like...well, like ants! I know, sounds crazy, but that's what they were shaped like! The big one looked to be maybe fifteen feet long - and it had wings! Like a big fly or somethin'! The other two seemed t'be chasin' the big one.

(demonstrates with his hands)

One here - two here - zoomin' around me like regular kamikazes! It liked t'scare me outa my pants!

(reflects)

It ain't as if that Ford was a brand new one. It was beat up t'begin with. What's all the beef?

Patricia, Graham and Kibbee exchange glances. Crotty suddenly regards them suspiciously.

CROTTY:

You don't believe me either, do ya?

PATRICIA:

On the contrary - we do.

CROTTY:

(brightening)

You do?

PATRICIA:

What direction were these - flying saucers going when you last saw them?

CROTTY:

(thinks a moment)

West, I'd say. Yeah - due West. Hey, will you all get me outa here?

GRAHAM:

We'll speak to the doctor about it.

(CONTINUED)

180 (Cont.1)

CROTTY:

I'll sure appreciate it. Try and get my clothes back, too. They won't give me nothin' but these slippers - won't even give me a rope to keep this bathrobe together.

He starts to demonstrate then remembers a lady is present. Graham, Patricia and Kibbee smile "goodbye" and exit.

181. INT. HOSPITAL HALL

DAY

A male nurse locks the door as they come into the hall. A DOCTOR across the hall is writing instructions on a chart. He hands chart to a Nurse as he sees our principals.

DOCTOR:

Well -- how was your talk with Mr. Crotty?

GRAHAM:

You're wise to keep him locked up, Doctor.

DOCTOR:

I've recommended his release.

(they eye him closely)

He's not demented. I'm convinced he's trying to pull a publicity stunt with that weird story.

GRAHAM:

That's why your government'd appreciate it if you kept him here - so he doesn't get any publicity.

(Doctor says "The government?")

He's to have no visitors and if any information is given out about him, Washington will hold you responsible, Doctor.

(Doctor stares at him)

I'm not at liberty to explain why this is essential. As soon as possible, we'll wire you and let you know when he's well.

The Doctor gapes as they turn and start away.

DISSOLVE TO:

182. INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

NIGHT

Medford runs a finger down the map from Alamogordo to Brownsville. Watching, are Patricia and Graham.

MEDFORD:

A bit more than 700 air miles from White Sands to Brownsville - southeast.

(CONTINUED)

182 (Cont.)

GRAHAM:

Crotty said they were heading west when he saw them.

MEDFORD:

(turns from map; picks up meteorological reports)

I believe him. There were strong easterly winds in the area the day Crotty had his experience with the ants. They'd follow the line of least resistance.
(regards map again)

I think we can surmise that one of the queens - possibly both of them - may create nests in this general area.

(indicates western Mexico to Pacific)

We'd better inform the Mexican authorities and concentrate our search efforts here. As far south as Panama, north to - oh, Santa Barbara on the California coast.

(as phone rings, he answers)

Hello -- Dr. Medford...

GRAHAM:

(regards map; shakes head)

That's a lot of area.

MEDFORD:

(reacts)

I'll be right there.

He hangs up and exits hurriedly. Patricia and Graham look after him, puzzled.

183. INT. HALLWAY

Medford, almost in a half-run, comes down the hall and enters the Monitor Room.

184. INT. MONITOR ROOM TOWARD DOOR

As Medford enters we see General L'Brien is standing behind the Navy radio operator who is typing down the code he hears thru his headphones. Sign on his radio receiver reads "INTERNATIONAL DISTRESS FREQUENCY ONLY". Medford joins O'Brien and leans past the radio operator to read the message in the typewriter. CAMERA MOVES PAST radio operator - and we faintly HEAR Morse code ditting away in his headphones. CAMERA CONTINUES TO MOVE into a CLOSE SHOT ON TYPEWRITER where we read:

"S O S... S O S S.S. VIKING, SINGAPORE BOUL
GET RADIO BEARING ON LOCATION...NAVIGATOR DEAD...
DO NOT KNOW EXACT LOCATION... GIANT ANTS BREAKING
THROUGH FORWARD HOLD...MOST OF CREW ALREADY DEAD...
REPEAT...GIANT ANTS BREAKING THROUGH FORWARD HOLD...
MOST OF CREW ALREADY DEAD...GET RADIO BEARING...
S O S... S O S ... S.S. VIKING...

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53

71.

185. REVERSE ANGLE FOR TIGHT THREE SHOT

Medford looks stricken. O'Brien glances at him soberly. The radio operator continues typing the S.O.S.

MEDFORD:

(almost to himself)

A nest... hatched -- aboard a ship at sea...

CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE on Radio Operator whose expression indicates he can hardly believe the message. CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER so headphone fills the frame and we HEAR the di-di-di-da-da-da-di-di-di of the S.O.S.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

186. INT. RADIO ROOM OF FREIGHTER
CLOSE ON HAND WORKING SIGNAL KEY

NIGHT

A radio OPERATOR is using a "bug", sending fast. CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see the Operator. His shirt is torn nearly off - his head and one arm are bloody. In his left hand he holds a .45 automatic. Beyond him is an open door with windows on either side. Through these we see there is a heavy fog. The freighter's loading lights illuminate the eerie, only half-seen view of carnage on the small portion of the freighter's deck visible from this angle. Most prominent in b.g. is a shattered hold from which have emerged giant ants. One monster in b.g. holds a dead seaman in its mandibles. Other dead or sorely hurt men lie on the deck or hold. Another ant moves its head and antennae rather wildly - seeking more to destroy. OVER the SOUND of the wireless "bug" are the screams and shouts of unseen men battling for their lives; rifle and pistol shots; the repeated sounding of the ship's whistle sounding "DISTRESS!"; and the continuous stridulation of the ants.

Suddenly a Seaman appears at the doorway. He fires a rifle at an o.s. attacker. Then the head of a giant ant appears and grabs the Seaman in its mandibles, pulling him from view. The Operator, almost hysterical, stays with his "Bug", pounding out the S.O.S. Then a giant ant appears outside one window. The monster crashes through the glass. The Operator turns and fires the .45 at it. CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE on ANT. The mandibles open savagely. We HEAR the Operator scream, and we -

DISSOLVE THROUGH
TO:

187. INT. CONFERENCE ROOM.

DAY

At the table are Medford, O'Brien, civilian Officials, high-ranking military and naval Officers. Patricia stands before the map on which we note five yellow flags are now pinned at a variety of locations, mostly in northwestern Mexico and Southern California. A red flag is stuck in the Pacific Ocean where the freighter was. An ADMIRAL, referring intermittently to a radiogram as he speaks, is reporting to the grave-faced group.

ADMIRAL:

The cruiser Milwaukee was able to get a radio bearing on the S.S. Viking before the signals stopped and proceeded at once to the location. Two Seamen who managed to escape from the giant ants were rescued from the sea. They were positive no others in the crew - either officers or men - remained alive aboard the stricken vessel. It was not possible to put aboard a search or rescue party since the ship was entirely infested with the monsters. Upon my orders, the S.S. Viking was sunk with naval gunfire. This was accomplished at oh-seven-hundred hours today.

The Admiral sits down. A civilian OFFICIAL seems unable to digest this horrendous news.

OFFICIAL:

I don't see how a ship at sea could... Doctor Medford -- how could these giant creatures get aboard a vessel without being seen?

MEDFORD:

(picks up report)

The S.S. Viking was anchored at Acapulco, Mexico, for three days and four nights. We believe that is where and when one of the missing queen ants flew aboard.

(to Patricia)

Doctor, tell them your information.

PATRICIA:

(referring to paper)

The ship's owners have reported that on hold number one, the hatch cover was off during an entire time of loading - even at night. The crew had shore leave every night, so only a skeleton watch was aboard. It was quite possible for a queen ant to fly onto that ship without being seen and, an open hold would appear most inviting as a place to lay her eggs and hatch out a nest.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
73.

187 (Cont.)

OFFICIAL:

(considers this;
impatiently)

I think it's time to inform the public about
this whole business! It can't be kept a
secret indefinitely!

MEDFORD:

We can't risk it, sir.

OFFICIAL:

You already have! The entire crew of the
Cruiser Milwaukee knows about these things
now!

ADMIRAL:

They know, sir, but the Milwaukee will be
kept at sea until this crisis is resolved.

The Official, being a politician, has a compulsion to keep
talking but can think of nothing further to say..

SECOND OFFICIAL:

(pauses -
regarding map)

What do the yellow flags on the map
indicate?

PATRICIA:

(indicating flags)

These four indicate locations where we
found dead males. The most recent finding
was four days ago - here near Mt. Wilson
in California. It was badly decomposed
and we figure it had been there for per-
haps a month to five weeks.

(Medford nods a confirmation)

This flag at Los Angeles indicates a lead.
Bob - uh - Mr. Robert Graham and Sergeant
Peterson are there now. They were flown
west by Major Kibbee to check a rather
large sugar theft...40 tons of it. We
haven't yet had a report from them about
it.

MEDFORD:

It may be nothing more than a robbery and
as unimportant as so many of the things
we've been running down. But it has to
be investigated.

DISSOLVE TO:

188. EXT. FREIGHT YARD

DAY

Graham and Ben are examining a freight car, empty except for a few broken #100 sugar sacks. Present is a railroad COP in civilian clothes. A fat slob of a man, a toothpick chewer, he answers questions in a surly way, barely bothering to look up from the comic section of a Sunday newspaper. A uniformed L.A. Policeman waits in a prowl car nearby.

GRAHAM:

When was this car broken into?

COP:

I told ya - Friday night. The yard watchman claims he didn't see or hear a thing.

(regards Ben who is looking
for tracks on ground around car)

What's so important you gotta work on Sunday?

GRAHAM:

Where's the watchman?

COP:

City jail. We're holdin' him. Any boob knows you'd need trucks to carry away forty tons of stuff - he said he didn't hear 'em. He's either lyin' or he's deaf...and he ain't deaf.

GRAHAM:

(to Ben)

Let's go talk to the watchman.

COP:

(as Graham and Ben start for car)

Least y'could do after spoilin' my day off is tell me how come a government cop's so interested in this deal.

GRAHAM:

I've got a sweet tooth.

DISSOLVE TO:

189. INT. DETECTIVE BUREAU ROOM

DAY

Not much activity; occasional phone rings; duty officers reading Sunday papers. One door leads to suggested hall corridor; others lead to interrogation rooms. Attention is on the WATCHMAN, an elderly man sitting across the table from Graham. A detective lounges in b.g., mildly curious.

WATCHMAN:

I've been with the road thirty years and never a blot on my record.

(CONTINUED)

189 (Cont.)

GRAHAM:

The yard cop thinks you made a deal not to see that car broken into.

WATCHMAN:

Now what kind of sense does that make? Is sugar a rare cargo? Is there a black market for it? Did you ever hear of a fence for hot sugar?

During this, from one of the interrogation rooms, comes a sudden burst of hysterical sobbing by a woman. Graham turns to look.

190. HIS VIEWPOINT

Ben and an L.A. Detective named DIXON are standing outside an interrogation room where we glimpse a woman wadded into a chair, crying convulsively. Dixon enters the room, closing the door. Ben pauses, then turns to come to Graham. During this action:

WATCHMAN:

(continuing)

If I was gonna make a deal with crooks to steal something, it wouldn't be forty tons of sugar. I swear I didn't hear a thing Friday night and...

BEN:

Come on, Bob. Want you to see something.

WATCHMAN:

...never in my life have I had anything to do with crooks! I'm an honest man and...

GRAHAM:

(rising)

Thanks, pop.

Graham goes with Ben who pauses momentarily outside the interrogation room door. We can faintly HEAR the sobbing woman. As Ben moves on towards the corridor door:

BEN:

Just identified her husband's body. Want you to see him.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

191. INT. MORGUE

Graham and Ben flank a CORONER who is lifting up the covering sheet so they, but not CAMERA, can view a cadaver on the wagon. Other corpses are suggested in gloomy b.g. Graham winces as he views the body.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
76.

191 (Cont.)

CORONER:

Don't think it happened in a machine...any machine that pulled him in hard enough to tear his arm off at the shoulder would've chewed up his face too... and look at that deep laceration across his chest ... Can't figure it except he died from shock and loss of blood.

BEN:

(as Graham glances at him)
Name's Tom Lodge. Police found him at six-thirty this morning. His car'd jumped the curb and run into a signboard... but not hard enough to do this - and they couldn't find the other arm.
(Graham emits a soundless whistle)
Joker is - his wife says he left the house about a quarter to six. He had his two kids with him... No sign of the kids yet.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

192. INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

DAY

MRS. LODGE is about 36, plainly dressed. Now drained of emotion, she's reached that stage of numbness where nothing seems real. A sympathetic Police Matron sits beside her. Dixon takes an occasional note as Graham questions her gently:

GRAHAM:

Mrs. Lodge, was it customary for your husband to take his sons out so early in the morning?

MRS. LODGE:

On Sundays. Tom works on Sundays - from nine to seven... it's an extra job he has. He works so hard for us ...he didn't have much time to spend with Jerry and Mike. That's why the three of them get up early on Sundays and go somewhere to play together for a few hours...

(Graham starts to speak "Where did...")
I was fixing breakfast for them when the police came and told me...waffles...we always have waffles on Sunday...

She stops and fights back tears. After a pause:

GRAHAM:

Do you know where they went this morning?

MRS. LODGE:

Where? No... they go different places...
(smiles slightly)

Last Sunday Tom took the boys to the zoo. They had such a good time. Tom fixed it with one of the

(CONTINUED)

192 (Cont.)

MRS. LODGE: (Cont.)

keepers for them to get in early and watch the feeding of the animals. Jerry talked about it all week.

(frowns)

There aren't many things Jerry can do...he still has to wear the brace on his leg, you know...ever since he had polio - when he was three. He's six now. Mike takes such good care of him. Not like some brothers - Mike never leaves Jerry to go and play with other children. Mike is only eight but he's very grown-up for his age. My husband....

(stops and stares at floor)

GRAHAM:

(glances at Dixon)

What other places did they go?

MRS. LODGE:

Oh - Tom takes them boat-riding at MacArthur Park sometimes...and for pony rides...or miniature golf. They boys always come home so happy...

(suddenly laughs)

...and so dirty! I keep asking Tom if he can't take them places and do things where they won't get so dirty. I always spend the rest....of.... the...day....cleaning...them...up....

She is staring, unable to go on as the potential future becomes too painful to think about. Graham draws a paper cup of water from a cooler and puts it in her hand. She starts to drink. In the middle of the drink, a flood of emotion chokes her and she starts to sob convulsively. The Police Matron embraces her. The men look at each other uncomfortably. Graham looks around as the door opens. Ben doesn't enter, only nods for Graham to come out. Graham exits.

193. INT. DETECTIVE BUREAU ROOM

DAY

as Graham comes out of the interrogation room. With Ben are two uniformed L.A. police officers. One is SUTTON, the other is RYAN.

BEN:

These are the officers who found Lodge. Patrolmen Sutton and Ryan.

(as Graham shakes hands with the officers)

I phoned Dr. Medford. He and Pat are flying out with General O'Brien. Be here by tonight. Major called. He'll be over soon as he's had breakfast.

GRAHAM:

Good.

(to officers)

Show me on the map just where you found Lodge.

(CONTINUED)

lb
bf

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
10/30/53
78.

193 (Cont.)

They move to a large scale map of Los Angeles. Sutton points out a location.

SUTTON:

Right there.

GRAHAM:

He was dead when you found him?

(Sutton nods)

Where's MacArthur Park?

(officer indicates it)

Long ways. Look - we've got to find out where he took his kids this morning. I don't think he could've driven very far the way he was cut up. Is there any area close to where you found him where kids might get a pony ride, miniature golf, go boat riding - stuff like that?

The officers regard the map a moment. They're doubtful.

RYAN:

I don't know of any miniature golf courses on our beat. Griffith Park's about the closest place where they could rent horses.

SUTTON:

That's almost as far from where we found him as MacArthur Park...His wife doesn't know where they were going?

GRAHAM:

(shakes head)

Did you make any arrests on your beat this morning between four A.M. and noon?

RYAN:

Yes sir - four...

(getting out citation book)

Three drunks and a traffic citation.

GRAHAM:

(as Ryan starts to open book)

I want to talk to all of them. There's an outside chance one may have seen or heard something that'll help us.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

NEW
SCENE

194. INT. DETECTIVE BUREAU ROOM

DAY

A flashy BLONDE glances uneasily at Ben and Kibbee as Graham turns from her to frown at two Skid Row type characters. One is almost asleep. The other thinks he's talking sense;

DRUNK:

I always been inclined toward the more informal type social life...this white tie and tails stuff ain't never cut no ice with me...

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
10/30/53
79:

194 (Cont.)

GRAHAM:

All right, Beau Brummell - knock it off.

DRUNK:

Yeah - of course - sure....

Graham looks at the Blonde. She fidgets.

BLONDE:

Gee, all I did was go through a red light and...

GRAHAM:

At sixty miles an hour. Was something chasing you?

BLONDE:

No. Gee, I was just in a hurry t'get home.

BEN:

From where?

BLONDE:

Well - I'd spent the night with a sick friend and...
(pauses)

I'd rather not mention any names. He's married.

GRAHAM:

(glances at Ben; sighs)

All right - let her go home.

Sutton nods the blonde towards the exit. Graham turns to regard the two drunks. One is totally asleep now. The other gets a whiff of the blonde's perfume as she passes him and almost falls out of his chair as he tries to keep her in view. Graham nods at Ryan:

GRAHAM:

We're through with them, too. Let 'em go back to the tank and sleep it off... You said there were three drunks?

RYAN:

The other one's in the Alcoholic ward at the County Hospital. Practically a permanent resident over there.

GRAHAM:

(nods at Ben and Kibbee)

Let's go.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

DIALOGUE
CHANGE

195. EXT. L.A. COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL

DAY

A view emphasizing the enormous size of the building. A police car pulls up. Graham, Ben and Kibbee get out and enter the building.

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
80.

196. INT. ALCOHOLIC WARD

DAY -

Beds on both sides - all filled. Some drunks sleeping. No violent, screaming people. A white-jacketed, humorless DOCTOR leads Graham, Ben and Kibbee toward the far end of the ward.

197. TRUCKING SHOT IN GROUP

DOCTOR:

He sneaked out of here Saturday afternoon. Back in at five this morning. You can talk to him but I don't know what you expect to find out. Gives us nothin' but trouble. Won't cooperate.

Graham, Ben and Kibbee observe some of the inmates they pass.

198. ON INMATE

A huge man in bed, softly singing a spiritual in a rich, bass voice. He eyes Kibbee's uniform and suddenly shouts:

INMATE:

We gonna be drafted!

199. ON SECOND INMATE

This one points his fingers at them and makes vocal sounds like a machine gun..."ah-ah-ah-ah." Then he's hit by enemy bullets and falls back, waving a gallant farewell at his attacker before expiring. He pops up immediately, grinning at them happily - a perpetual juvenile seeking approval for his exhibition.

200. ON JENSEN

In a bed near a heavily-screened window is JENSEN. A small, emaciated-looking man with tremendous eyes, Jensen regards the visitors warily as they come to his bed.

DOCTOR:

This is the man.

(shakes finger at Jensen)

Mind your manners, Jensen.

(to Graham)

If he gives any trouble, I'll be right outside the ward.

The doctor exits. Jensen watches the doctor leave and licks his lips nervously. He glances at Graham and Ben, then smiles at Kibbee.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
81.

200 (Cont.)

JENSEN:

How de do, Officer. Lookin' for recruits?

KIBBEE:

(grins)

Not today, Mac.

GRAHAM:

You see anything unusual yesterday - or this morning, Jensen?

JENSEN:

No.

(nods at window)

Same as always.

(gets up in bed and looks out window)

No, they're gone now. Saw some little airplanes this mornin'. Didn't seem big enough for them to get into.

GRAHAM:

Big enough for who to get into?

JENSEN:

The ants.

(looks at Kibbee)

I'd sure like to get outa here but I ain't gonna join the army t'do it and you can't make me. There's laws, you know.

Graham, Ben and Kibbee, startled, look out the window.

201. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

A big view of Los Angeles from a window high up in the General Hospital, including the concrete bed of the Los Angeles River and the Civic Center beyond.

202. ON TRIO

as they turn from the window.

GRAHAM:

(carefully)

What kind of ants do you see, Jensen?

JENSEN:

Big ones.

(rises up in bed to look out again)

They ain't there right now. Mostly at night I see 'em.

(CONTINUED)

202 (Cont.)

Graham, Ben and Kibbee turn back to the window. Jensen regards Kibbee, grins suddenly.

JENSEN:

I'll sign up if you make me a sergeant and put me in charge of the booze.

(pulls sheet over head;
sings tunelessly)

Make me a sergeant and gimme the booze. Make me a sergeant and gimme the booze...

Graham pulls the sheet away from Jensen's face. He stops singing and grins owlishly.

GRAHAM:

Look, buster - exactly where do these ants show up?

JENSEN:

In the river.

(pops up in bed; looks out window)

In the river - the riv-er.

(wistfully)

I seen it with water in it once. Now when was that...?

He ponders this. Ben, Kibbee and Graham are studying the view again. Graham nudges Ben and points.

203. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

View from window with river bed in b.g.

GRAHAM'S VOICE: (O.S.)

In the river bed - see those big openings in the sides - like sewers or something?

204. NEW ANGLE

The three men, all very sobered, turn back to Jensen.

GRAHAM:

How long have you been seeing them?

JENSEN:

(vaguely)

Long time. How long I been here?

BEN:

The doctor said he was first admitted five weeks ago.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
83.

204 (Cont.)

JENSEN:

(to Ben)

Thanks, Mac.

(as the three start away)

Take me with ya? I'll enlist - I promise!

(pulls sheet over head; starts
tuneless song again)

Make me a sergeant and gimme the booze...

The three are hurrying out, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

205. ON BRIDGE

DAY

A Police Car stops for traffic mid-way across a bridge. Graham is in front with the driver, Ryan. Kibbee and Ben are in rear seat. They look at the river bed below. The car moves on, and we

DISSOLVE THRU TO:

206. EXT. RAMP TO RIVER BED

DAY

The police car drives down a ramp leading to the river bed.

207. AT BOTTOM OF RAMP

The car emerges from the ramp, turns and stops. The occupants get out of the car; look up and down the river.

GRAHAM:

What's that opening? A sewer outlet?

RYAN:

No sir - a storm drain...one of the small ones.

GRAHAM:

Not much water in them, huh?

RYAN:

Not this time of the year. Mostly what the engineers call "dry season run-off" - you know, from people waterin' their lawns - stuff like that. They're part of the flood control system to handle rain water.

GRAHAM:

You say there are bigger drains?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
84.

207 (Cont.)

RYAN:

Yeah. They open up into the river bed all the way from Sepulveda dam in the Valley to Long Beach at the ocean.

GRAHAM:

Let's see a big one.

They get back into the car and CAMERA PANS WITH IT as it starts driving down the river bed.

208. SIXTH STREET RAMP EXIT INTO RIVER BED DAY

(NOTE: THIS RAMP SERVES AS BIG DRAIN SITE AND SITE FOR LATER DESCRIBED COMMUNICATIONS CENTER)

Car approaches and stops. The men get out of the car and regard the huge opening. Graham turns to Ryan;

GRAHAM:

Where's the County Hospital from here?

RYAN:

(pointing)

Right over there.

209. FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

A view of the County Hospital as seen from river bed.

210. GROUP SHOT

Graham looks from the hospital to the drain. The group starts for the drain. Graham catches something o.s., pauses, and starts for it. Ben follows him. Ryan and Kibbee wait.

211. ANOTHER ANGLE

In f.g. is a brightly colored, gasoline-powered, model airplane. It is slightly damaged. Graham comes forward and picks it up. Ben and he look at it. Ryan and Kibbee have now come up.

KIBBEE:

Pretty good model of a name type of plane).

GRAHAM:

Get on your radio. Have somebody check with Mrs. Lodge and find out if her sons had a model like this. Wait for the report.

(CONTINUED)

211 (Cont.)

Ryan takes the plane and hurries towards the police car.
The others start for the opening of the big drain.

212. EXT. THE BIG DRAIN

DAY

Outside the drain opening is a large bed of silt. Only the center is muddy from the run-off water. The three observe the silt. Ben and Graham are very interested in the way it has been trampled and in a large dark stain. Graham kneels and fingers the stained silt. He looks up at Ben;

GRAHAM:

Could be blood.

Ben nods. He points at a trail of stain marks leading away. He follows them and kneels down to regard the silt at the end of the stains. Graham comes to him.

BEN:

Tire marks. Pretty new tires, too.
(looks at Graham)

Lodge had new tires on his car.

Graham nods. They start back towards the drain opening. They pause as Kibbee beckons to them. He is kneeling, looking at something. They go to him and look at the silt just outside the drain opening.

213. CLOSE ON PRINT IN SILT

An ant print - same as we first saw in New Mexico.

214. GROUP SHOT

The three look at each other, then at the drain opening. Ben steps a few feet into the opening - sniffs carefully. He looks back at Graham - shakes his head.

BEN:

I don't get any trace of the brood odor - no smell of formic acid.

GRAHAM:

Just the same - it could all fall right into place. Lodge and his kids down here flying a model plane. One or more ants attack. The father fights, trying to protect his kids. Somehow he manages to get loose from them - gets to his car and drives off.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
86.

214 (Cont.)

SHOT

BEN:

Yeah - and the kids? Could they have gotten away, d'you suppose? Maybe ran - even into one of these drains.

(looks at Graham)

Or the ants got 'em.

They look at the drain opening, then react as Ryan calls to them. They turn and see the officer hurrying towards them.

RYAN:

Hey - that model plane belonged to the Lodge kids all right...and she just remembered - the husband used to bring the boys down here to fly it. It's gotta be their plane - same color and everything - and there's no model plane at home.

GRAHAM:

(turns to observe drain)

Where do these things go - I mean - how far do they extend?

RYAN:

I don't know for sure. All I know - there's something more than seven hundred miles of 'em under the city.

Graham, Ben and Kibbee are startled at this news. They regard the drain soberly, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

214A. ANTEROOM OFFICIAL OFFICE, L.A. CITY HALL DAY

NEW
SCENE

It is crowded with reporters besieging a harassed AIDE to the city official. Questions tumble over each other;

REPORTER:

Why's the Army sending troops into the L.A. Area?

2ND REPORTER:

Yeah - and a Marine Regiment from Pendleton? What's happened?

3RD REPORTER:

Why a special press conference at five o'clock on a Sunday?

AIDE:

Gentlemen, you'll just have to wait....

REPORTER:

Why all these VIPs from Washington?

2ND REPORTER:

Has the cold war gotten hot?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL.

CHANGE
12/3/53
86A.

214A (Cont.)

The babbling ceases as a door to the office opens. A grave-faced OFFICIAL nods for the reporters to come in.

OFFICIAL:

Come in, gentlemen.

214B. INT. OFFICIAL'S OFFICE

DAY

NEW
SCENE

View of L.A. from windows. Present are Medford, O'Brien, a Navy Admiral, city police and other officials. An engineer is completing installation of a battery of microphones on the table in front of O'Brien. A TV camera or two are being focused on Medford and O'Brien. The reporters crowd into the room.

OFFICIAL:

Gentlemen, you have been called here to be informed about the most serious crisis this city has ever faced. There is no time for questions. Please listen carefully so you can report the facts accurately to your newspapers.

(indicates the persons)

This is Dr. Harold Medford of the Department of Agriculture...General Robert O'Brien of Air Force Intelligence...Admiral James of Naval Intelligence....the others you know.

(to engineer)

Are you ready, sir?

The engineer nods and an ANNOUNCER steps to the battery of microphones. He gets a hand cue from the TV cameramen; from the engineer:

ANNOUNCER:

We interrupt all radio and television programs for an indefinite period. Please keep your radio and television sets turned on. This is an emergency. I repeat - this is an emergency!
(he nods to O'Brien and steps aside)

O'BRIEN:

By direction of the President of the United States, in full agreement with the Governor of the State of California, and the Mayor of Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles is, in the interests of public safety, hereby proclaimed to be under martial law!

The reporters react.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
86B.

214C. CLOSE ON O'BRIEN

NEW
SCENE

O'BRIEN:

Curfew is at eighteen hundred hours. Any persons on the streets or outside their quarters after six PM tonight will be subject to arrest by the military police.

Now as for the reasons for this most drastic decision...Some months ago, in the desert of New Mexico, gigantic ants were discovered. The colony was destroyed but two queen ants escaped...One has been accounted for and destroyed. The other has not yet been found but now is known to have established a nest somewhere in the storm drains beneath the streets of Los Angeles...We do not know how long this nest has been established nor how many of these lethal monsters have been hatched. There may be only a few - or there may be thousands....If any new queen ants have hatched and escaped from this nest, other American cities may even now be in danger.

These creatures are extremely dangerous. They have already killed a number of persons.

Stay in your homes. Repeat. Stay in your homes. Your personal safety - the safety of this entire city - depends upon your complete cooperation with the military authorities.

DURING ABOVE;

NEW
SCENE

214D. A MONTAGE SHOWING:

- a.) EXT. STREET SHOESHINE STAND...shine-boy, customer, two pedestrians...attention arrested by radio.
- b.) EXT. CAR PARKED IN PARK...boy and girl...necking is interrupted...they stare at car radio.
- c.) EXT. TV STORE...people stand outside window looking at O'Brien on TV set inside store...sirens sound... people look and see;
- d.) EXT. STREET...CONVOY of military vehicles, led by motorcycles, speeds past.
- e.) INT. BOOTH AND WINDOW...two bobby-soxers and boy friends - attention on radio - attention goes to window...convoy of military vehicles speeds past outside.
- f.) CLOSE ON WOMAN in hospital bed...She and husband listen to radio.
- g.) ON TV SET showing O'Brien. REVERSE ANGLE and we SEE

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
87..

214D (Cont.)

- h.) INT. BAR...assorted customers and bartender are staring up at c.s. TV set...react to sound of sirens...
- i.) DAY STOCK SHOT of people leaving a theatre or auditorium.
- j.) DAY STOCK SHOT of people swarming out of L.A. Coliseum or Wrigley Field.
- k.) EXT. STREET...Military convoy speeding down street.

NEW
SCENE

214E. EXT. STREET OF TRACT HOUSES

NIGHT

Only sign of life is an armed jeep slowly moving down a street. Little houses, mostly alike, on both sides. No other people. No noise.

DISSOLVE TO:

215. OMITTED.

SHOT

216. VIEWPOINT FROM CAR

as it drives down ramp and turns upon reaching the river bed. We SEE from Mrs. Lodge's viewpoint, the activity. Military and police vehicles. Jeeps with large searchlights, parked in front of drains, waiting to enter. And finally a brightly lighted group of vehicles parked adjacent to a radio-equipped truck. This is the COMMUNICATIONS CENTER. Medford, Patricia, Ben, and Graham are studying maps with a civilian engineer. O'Brien, Kibbee and several other military men are near the radio truck. The car pulls up and stops near the radio truck from which we HEAR an almost constant stream of barely distinguishable reports from troop units. A duty-bound M.P. SERGEANT eyes the car forbiddingly and comes to it. We note that Graham and Ben also glance at the car.

M.P. SERGEANT:

You gotta pass to be down here, lady?

SHOT

217. ANGLE ON CAR

Mrs. Lodge seems bewildered at the military activity. The Matron starts to explain to the M.P.:

MATRON:

Well, no, but I am...

M.P. SERGEANT:

No pass - no stay. This is a restricted area, lady.

(waves her to drive on)

Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
88.

217 (Cont.)

GRAHAM:

(coming up)

Hold it, Sergeant.

M.P. SERGEANT:

They go no pass, sir, and my orders are to....

GRAHAM:

Go beef to the general.

(nods to matron and Mrs. Lodge)

Evening, Ma'am.

MRS. LODGE:

Is there any word yet?

GRAHAM:

Not yet, Mrs. Lodge. But we've got a lotta people here who're going to try and find them. It may take us quite a while. Wouldn't you rather wait at home?

MRS. LODGE:

Oh no - no. I couldn't. I want to be here when you...

(stops to keep from crying)

GRAHAM:

Yessum. Well - try and relax and don't worry.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Graham as he returns to the group. As he approaches we hear the ENGINEER saying to Medford;

ENGINEER:

... and since time is of the utmost importance, I suggest we pump gasoline into the main drains and light it. It'd burn out anything inside there and yet we could still control the fire so there'd be little or no damage to property above the street. Whatever ants broke out, the troops could handle.

GRAHAM:

No. You can't do that!

(as they look at him)

Not until we know for sure whether those two boys are in there.

ENGINEER:

(coming up)

Do you think there's a chance they're still alive?

(Graham doesn't reply)

Are we to jeopardize the lives of the (five and a half million) people of this city for two children who, in all probability, are already dead?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
89.

217 (Cont.1)

GRAHAM:

Ask their mother that question, mister.
She's right over there.

MEDFORD:

I know - Ben told us about her and you're
right, Bob.

(to Engineer)

I've told you before -- we can't risk fire
until we know whether any new queens have
hatched and flown out of this nest.

He glances compassionately at Mrs. Lodge in the matron's
car. He sighs heavily, then turns to O'Brien;

MEDFORD:

Can we start now, General?

O'BRIEN:

I think so. Still got to get some coverage
north of here but every drain to the south,
as far as Long Beach, is guarded by a bazooka
team or flame-thrower. Police units and
Marines have covered all the open-ditch drains.
Yeah - let's go.

(turns to radio truck;

picks up microphone)

To all search units. Proceed into storm drains.

218. ANGLE FROM WITHIN DRAIN OPENING

as CAMERA looks out at the Communications Center and we
SEE people dispersing. In f.g. is a jeep. The driver
is a city engineer wearing a sandhogger's helmet. A
flame-thrower and a rifle with a grenade launcher are
in the back seat. Graham and Patricia approach this jeep.
They stop and regard each other.

GRAHAM:

Watch yourself.

PATRICIA:

Watch yourself.

Graham looks at her a moment, then looks back towards the
matron's car in the b.g. Then he turns and gets into the
jeep.

219. ON BIG DRAIN OPENING

NIGHT

As Graham's jeep enters, followed by: a jeep with an Army lieutenant as observer; then Patricia in her jeep; then Ben in his jeep; then two more with Army personnel. Six jeeps, in all, entering the big drain. During this we see other jeeps in b.g., similarly manned and equipped, passing on their way to enter other drain openings along both sides of the river bed.

220. INT. BIG DRAIN

The weird, labyrinth-like concrete tunnel echoes and re-echoes with the SOUND of motors as the CAMERA sees the headlights of the approaching cavalcade. CAMERA PANS the jeeps past, HOLDING BRIEFLY on our principals.

221. EXT. RIVER BED

NIGHT

A large drain in f.g. Approaching jeeps in b.g. The lead jeep turns off into the drain. We SEE it contains a driver and KIBBEE. The other jeeps continue on past Camera.

222. INT. BIG DRAIN - (TRIPLE JUNCTION)

The drain branches off in three directions at this point. The six jeeps approach and are PANNED PAST CAMERA as they separate to enter the three separate drain openings. Two jeeps enter each new drain. Graham in one, Patricia and Ben in another, the last two jeeps in the third drain.

223. INT. BIG DRAIN - (AS ABOVE BUT ONLY TWO DRAIN OPENINGS)

Two jeeps are approaching. CAMERA PANS with them. Graham, in the lead turns off into one branch tunnel. He waves to the other jeep as it turns off into the second tunnel. The jeeps proceed - now alone in separate tunnels.

224. INT. BIG DRAIN

Repeat similar action as above with PATRICIA and BEN.

225. INT. DRAIN

Headlights of jeep approach. CAMERA PANS with it and we see Graham click on a walkie-talkie and start a report.

GRAHAM:

Graham in drain 203. Repeat...

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
91.

226. EXT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

NIGHT

Medford, O'Brien and some civilian engineers stand beside the radio truck (Signal Corps type communications vehicle). In b.g. is the matron's car where Mrs. Lodge also listens intently as the radio reports come through.

GRAHAM'S VOICE:

(from loud-speaker)

...Graham in drain 203. In six-tenths of a mile. Nothing to report.

227. INT. DRAIN

Patricia's jeep is moving slowly along. She clicks on her walkie-talkie.

PATRICIA:

Medford in drain 207. Repeat. Medford in drain 207. In one-half mile. Nothing to report.

228. INT. DRAIN

Ben's jeep moves slowly along. Ben clicks on his walkie-talkie.

BEN:

Peterson in drain 223. Repeat. Peterson in drain 223...

229. EXT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

NIGHT

BEN'S VOICE:

(from loud-speaker)

...In six-tenths of a mile. Nothing to report.

The attention of Medford and O'Brien go to a truck filled with Marines in battle dress. A Marine Officer waves the truck on and it heads north, CAMERA PANNING WITH IT. During this:

KIBBEE'S VOICE:

(from loud-speaker)

Kibbee in drain 192. Repeat. Kibbee in drain 192. In eight tenths of a mile. Nothing to report.

MALE VOICE:

(from loud-speaker)

Sergeant Abrams in drain 413. Repeat. Sergeant Abrams in drain 413. In six-tenths of a mile. Nothing to report.

The CAMERA HAS STOPPED on Mrs. Lodge, sitting in the matron's car. She is listening intently.

230. ON MEDFORD AND O'BRIEN

Medford is looking at Mrs. Lodge. O'Brien is looking after the o.s. Marine truck. O'Brien nods with satisfaction.

O'BRIEN:

Those Marines will sew up all the drain openings north of here.

Medford doesn't reply. He starts for Mrs. Lodge, CAMERA PANNING with him.

231. ON MATRON'S CAR

as Medford comes to the side of the car where Mrs. Lodge sits. She looks at him vaguely, her painful anxiety mirrored in her eyes. He pauses, then gently pats her on one arm.

MEDFORD:

If your children are in there, they'll be found.

She looks at him gratefully, then buries her face in her hands.

232. EXT. RIVER BED (REMOTE SPOT) NIGHT

as the truck of Marines approaches and stops. No activity in b.g. An officer jumps out of the cab. A bazooka team - LOADER, GUNNER and Ammo Carrier climb down from the back of the truck with their weapon. Two other Marines jump down and lift out portable searchlights. The officer comes to the bazooka team and light men. He points at a storm drain opening in b.g.

OFFICER:

Set up your searchlights here so you can watch that drain opening and...

(pointing up river)

...the one further down. You can cover them both from here. Load and be ready to fire the moment you see any ants come out of them. And keep on firing until they stop.

The Officer hurries back to the cab, gets in and the truck grinds off. The Marines watch it leave, then look at each other blankly. A Marine turns a spotlight on one of the drains. The LOADER shrugs. He picks up a rocket;

LOADER:

He's had it.

GUNNER:

(serious type; squints at distant drain)
I'll say.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
93.

232 (Cont.)

GUNNER: (Cont.)

(shoulders bazooka; sights on drain)

How's he expect anybody to even see an ant from here?

233. INT. STORM DRAIN

We SEE the search and headlights of an approaching jeep. As it nears we see Patricia. Her walkie-talkie suddenly sounds off;

BEN'S VOICE:

(from radio)

Stop all motors! Stop all motors!

The driver brakes to a stop; shuts off motor. The quiet is startling.

234. FLASH SHOTS OF:

- A. KIBBEE motions his driver to stop. Silence.
- B. An ARMY SERGEANT waves his driver to stop. Silence.
- C. GRAHAM waves his driver to stop. Silence.

235. INT. DRAIN

On Ben, listening intently to the silence. He holds the walkie-talkie to his lips, waiting. Finally;

BEN:

This is Peterson in drain 223. We're in just over a mile...thought I heard something...
(pauses)

We very faintly HEAR the distant SOUND of a whimpering child.

BEN:

(reacts)

Hold it. There it is again. Standby!

He stands up in the jeep, trying to locate the source of the sound. The driver moves the searchlight back and forth trying to see something ahead. Ben finally looks back and up at the opening of a feeder drain, large enough in diameter for a man to crawl through (with a flame-thrower strapped on his back). The feeder drain is a bit behind them. The driver backs the jeep up. Ben stands on the back of the jeep and pulls himself up until his head is at the base of the pipe. The whimpering is louder. Ben drops down and turns to the driver excitedly;

BEN:

Where does this thing lead to?

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
94.

235 (Cont.)

SHOT

The driver grabs a map and spreads it out on the hood of the jeep. He checks it hastily, then;

DRIVER:

That feeder pipe runs into a main line drain that isn't finished yet - still in the construction stage.

Ben picks the flame-thrower out of the back seat and gets into the harness.

BEN:

Buckle me up.

(the driver does)

Let 'em know where I'm going.

He steps onto the jeep hood again. With a boost from the driver, he hoists himself into the feeder pipe. He turns back and the driver tosses up a flashlight. Ben starts into the pipe.

SHOT

236. INT. FEEDER PIPE ANGLE FROM BEHIND PIPE

as he flashes the light down the pipe. The whimpering comes out of the darkness ahead - then stops. Only silence. Ben starts crawling, elbowing his way along.

SHOT

237. INT. DRAIN ON BEN'S DRIVER

The man picks up the walkie-talkie;

DRIVER:

Peterson is going through the connecting feeder to drain 267...

238. EXT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

NIGHT

SHOT

Medford, O'Brien, engineers and others are listening intently. In b.g. we see Mrs. Lodge, also listening.

DRIVER'S VOICE:

(from loud-speaker)

...We've heard what may be the kids. Repeat.

We've heard what may be the kids.

Big reaction from the people. In b.g. we SEE Mrs. Lodge getting out of the car to come closer.

DRIVER'S VOICE:

(continuing)

My map shows a portion of drain 267 is unfinished with construction postponed for the last sixty days. They may have left work lights installed. If so, get them turned on. Standby.

The city engineer is starting to check his big map. Medford puts a comforting arm around Mrs. Lodge's shoulders.

DIALOGUE
CHANGE

"THEM!"
FINAL

9/23/53
95.

239. INT. FEEDER PIPE

On Ben as he elbows through the pipe.

240. INTERCUT WITH SHOTS OF

- A. Patricia tensely waiting, listening for further reports.
- B. Graham waiting for more reports.
- C. Kibbee waiting for more reports.

241. INT. FEEDER PIPE ANGLE FROM BEHIND BEN

as he crawls along. He reacts, stopping, as suddenly the end of the pipe is revealed ahead of him as lights go on in the big drain beyond.

BEN:

Mike - Jerry - are ya there!

MIKE'S VOICE: (O.S.)

Yes! We're here!

Ben yells back down the pipe;

BEN:

(with gusto)

They're alive!

His words echo and re-echo. He starts crawling forward as;

242. FLASH SHOTS OF

- A. Ben's DRIVER beside the jeep in the drain, yells into walkie-talkie;

DRIVER:

They're alive!

- B. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER ON GROUP

reactions from all. Mrs. Lodge sags against Medford as;

DRIVER'S VOICE:

(from loudspeaker)

Tell Mrs. Lodge her boys are alive!

- C. ON GRAHAM, as he grins and his driver starts turning around to start for Ben.
- D. ON PATRICIA, a happy smile on her face, as she motions her driver to get started.

243. INT. FEEDER PIPE ON BEN

as he reaches end of the pipe and looks down to SEE:

244. INT. INCOMPLETE STORM DRAIN BEN'S VIEWPOINT-

The feeder pipe ends at right angles to the big drain and is about ten feet above the drain floor which is cluttered with rubble, bags of cement, shoring timbers, etcetera. Opposite the pipe is new construction where another large drain has been started, planned to connect at right angles to the main drain. The section that has been dug out is shored up with heavy timbers. Two ants are probing at these timbers - trying to reach something behind them.

245. ON BEN

He blanches at sight of the ants.

BEN:

Mike - Jerry?

246. FROM HIS VIEWPOINT

Two small heads peek out from behind some of the timbers. MIKE, 8, and JERRY, 6. We eventually learn Jerry wears a brace on one leg. One of the ants makes a savage lunge towards the boys. They duck from sight. We HEAR Jerry begin to sob convulsively.

247. ON BEN

as he grimly gets the flame-thrower into position. Then he stops - baffled - frustrated.

248. ANOTHER ANGLE

with little boys in f.g. The shoring timbers and the ants are between them and the opposite wall of the drain. One ant continuously probes towards the boys, making the view of Ben in the feeder pipe only a series of intermittent glimpses. The boys seem momentarily safe if they remain where they are. But Ben cannot use his weapon so long as the ants stay between him and the boys.

249. ON BEN

His brain races as he considers the dilemma. Finally;

BEN:

Now listen to me - Mike - Jerry - you're gonna be all right. Just stay put and we'll get you outa there.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
97

249 (Cont.)

He reacts to the strong brood odor; looks both ways; then turns and calls down the pipe...

NEW
SCENE

BEN:

There are two ants here...but I get a strong brood odor - just like it was in the nest in New Mexico... report that...I must be near the nest...I'm in a bind with the kids - I can't use the flame-thrower because they're right in the line of fire...tell O'Brien to send in the troops...

He gives his attention to the situation - trying to figure a way to shoot the ants without injuring the boys.

250. OMITTED.

NEW
SCENE

251. EXT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

NIGHT

Medford, O'Brien and the Engineer listen carefully.

DRIVER'S VOICE:

Peterson says it smells like the nest in New Mexico. ...brood odor, he calls it.

Medford and O'Brien react. The General bends over the map.

NEW
SCENE

252. INSERT: MAP OF STORM DRAINS

O'Brien's hand draws a heavy crayon circle around the target area. OVER THIS WE HEAR:

DRIVER'S VOICE:

(continuing)

He has asked for troops to be sent in.

NEW
SCENE

253. BACK TO SCENE

O'Brien picks up the microphone, looks at Medford.

MEDFORD:

(nods)

He's found the nest.

O'BRIEN:

To all units - to all units...condition Red - drain 267 is the target area! Repeat! Condition Red - the target area is drain two-six-seven!

254. FLASH OF

SHOT

a. Armed jeeps start speeding through storm drains.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
98.

254 (Cont.)

SHOT

b. Graham's jeep races through the drains.

SHOT

c. Patricia's jeep races through drains.

NEW
SCENE

d. A military truck grinds to a stop at a street intersection. Demolition troops scurry from it to a manhole and start descending into the drain below.

NEW
SCENE

e. Demolition troops come down metal rungs from manhole and start running, on the double, through a storm drain.

SHOT

f. Jeeps speeding through drains.

NEW
SCENE

g. Troops on foot running through drains.

OVER ALL OF ABOVE:

O'BRIEN'S VOICE:

(from radio)

Demolition squads - enter drain 267 through manhole at intersection of Verdugo Road and Fletcher Drive! Repeat - to all units - Condition Red - target area is drain 267.

NEW
SCENE

255. EXT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
CLOSE ON O'BRIEN AND MEDFORD

NIGHT

O'BRIEN:

(sets mike aside; calls off;)

Bring up my jeep.

(to Medford)

Let's hope we've found this nest in time, doctor.

MEDFORD:

If we haven't....

His expression indicates the world's in large trouble.

SHOT

256. INT. INCOMPLETED STORM DRAIN

The giant ants are working on the timbers. There is a sudden sag in the ceiling timbers.

SHOT

257. ON BEN

He succeeds in pushing the last reinforcing bar aside. Carefully, he pushes himself out of the feeder pipe, and starts to lower himself.

SHOT

258. ANOTHER ANGLE

Ben swings down from the feeder pipe and hustles to a defensible position where he unlatches the flame-thrower and shoots a squirt at the nearest ant.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
99.

SHOT

259. ON ANT

as it burns and collapses.

SHOT

260. ON BEN

as he runs to another position to fire at the second ant. He calls to the boys;

BEN:

Mike - Jerry - get over into the corner!

As the boys run out, he blasts the second ant and it collapses. Ben hurries to the boys.

BEN:

You all right?

(boy replies "yeah")

Come on.

He picks up one boy and with the other following, starts across to the feeder pipe. In b.g. we see ant appearing.

SHOT

261. NEW ANGLE

Ben slips out of the flame-thrower harness so he can hoist one boy up into the feeder pipe. As he reaches for the other boy he sees the attacking ant. He hastily pushes the second boy into the pipe, urging him to crawl to safety.

BEN:

Crawl, Mike - hurry up - crawl, crawl!

SHOT

262. FROM BEN'S VIEWPOINT

The giant ant is closer. Its mandibles are opening savagely.

SHOT

263. ON BEN

He jumps to grab at the lower lip of the feeder pipe. Mike clings to one of his hands, trying to help. Ben struggles to pull himself up. The giant ant enters the frame. Ben, straining to get to safety, gets one elbow into the pipe when the monster grabs him. Ben screams in agony.

NEW
SCENE

264. NEW ANGLE

Graham and his troops arrive at end of drain. Graham leaps from the seat and fires his rifle at the ant.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
100.

SHOT 265. ON BEN AND ANT
As the bullets hit the ant.

SHOT 266. ANOTHER ANGLE
The ant dies and drops Ben.

NEW
SCENE 267. ON GRAHAM
He reacts to the stridulation noises coming from down the tunnel. He looks.

NEW
SCENE 268. HIS VIEWPOINT
Extending some distance is a new, incompleated tunnel, the near end shored up with timbers. Suggested beyond is an ant-made tunnel with a hole leading downwards. Ants are coming toward us.

NEW
SCENE 269. ON GRAHAM
He waves troops up.

GRAHAM:

Keep at 'em!

He starts for Ben.

NEW
SCENE 270. ON BEN
as Graham comes running up. He kneels beside Ben. Ben is in great pain and near death. Graham looks around;

GRAHAM:

Where are the kids?

BEN:

(with effort)

They're okay - in the pipe...

Ben sags, dead. A soldier has come up. He looks at Ben as Graham reaches for his pulse. The soldier shouts off;

SOLDIER:

Medics!

GRAHAM:

It's too late.

He looks back at the sound of firing, then grimly starts back for the action.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
101.

NEW
SCENE

271. ON GRAHAM

As he arrives at the point of action. A soldier fires a rifle grenade. Graham looks.

NEW
SCENE

272. VIEWPOINT WITH GRAHAM IN F.G.

More timbers collapse as the grenade bursts. Graham reacts as he hears;

MEDFORD'S VOICE:

Stop the firing! Stop the firing!

O'BRIEN'S VOICE:

Cease fire! Cease fire!

Medford and O'Brien come up. Medford peers worriedly at the tunnel.

MEDFORD:

You've nearly closed it up! No more explosives!
(pauses; to O'Brien)
Is there any type of gas we could use?

O'BRIEN:

We couldn't risk it down here. We might poison the whole city.

MEDFORD:

We've got to go through there and locate the egg chamber - find out if any new queens have hatched out.

Graham puts his rifle aside and picks a tommy gun out of the lead jeep. He turns to the troops;

GRAHAM:

I need some volunteers!

There is a pause, then about eight soldiers, some with tommy guns, one with a flame-thrower, work their way up to him. Graham leads off towards the tunnel, the volunteers following.

NEW
SCENE

273. INT. PARTIALLY WRECKED TUNNEL

Graham and the troops start into the tunnel, having to push debris aside to gain entrance; forced to work their way past a dead ant. They react as the stridulation stops - then continue on.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
102.

NEW
SCENE

274. ON MEDFORD AND O'BRIEN

as they watch the men going into the partially wrecked tunnel. They turn as Patricia comes up. She looks anxiously at the last of the volunteers entering the tunnel.

PATRICIA:
Bob and Ben in there?

MEDFORD:
Just Bob and some troops....
(remembering)
Ben? Where is he?

O'Brien soberly points o.s. They look.

NEW
SCENE

275. THEIR VIEWPOINT

Ben has been placed on a stretcher. A Medic is covering his face and body with a blanket.

NEW
SCENE

276. ON MEDFORD, PATRICIA, O'BRIEN

They look stricken as they realize Ben is dead. Then Patricia looks anxiously after Graham. Medford holds her arm; pats her hand.

NEW
SCENE

277. INT. PARTIALLY WRECKED TUNNEL

Graham and the troops work through the tunnel. Dirt sifts down on them as they work around another dead ant. There are small landslides.

NEW
SCENE

278. ON VOLUNTEERS

Suddenly a heavy timber falls on one of the soldiers. He screams with pain, then blacks out. Graham hesitates, then goes on, followed by others, as the troops in the rear go to work lifting the timber off the man. One shouts back "Medic!"

NEW
SCENE

279. ON GRAHAM

As he and volunteers approach. Ahead is a barrier of fallen debris. He and two soldiers go to work, trying to clear an entrance. Suddenly out of a side-mass of debris, lunges an ant and seizes one of the men in the s.g. Graham whistles and fires a burst from his tommy gun into the creature. It drops, but the soldier is unconscious. Graham turns back to work on the opening. It is now large enough for one man to get through at a time. Graham leads off.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
103.

NEW
SCENE

280. NEW ANGLE

Lighted only by the torches held by men behind him, Graham comes into a CLOSE SHOT. He tries to see ahead.. Suddenly, we HEAR the sickening sound of a cave-in. Graham is left in darkness. CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSE on his eyes. We HEAR rustling sounds of movement all around.

NEW
SCENE

281. ANGLE IN TUNNEL

The soldiers are frantically digging to try and get through to Graham. They react as the sound of stridulation begins. Then they resume their efforts. Medford, Patricia and O'Brien enter. She reacts with apprehension.

NEW
SCENE

282. CLOSE ON GRAHAM

He can't see. The sound is deafening. Across his face sweeps the brush-like end of an ant's antennae.

NEW
SCENE

283. ANGLE IN TUNNEL

The troops are digging. They react to the sound of shots from the other side.

SOLDIER:

We're through. Let's go!

They start going through to Graham.

NEW
SCENE

284. ON GRAHAM

As the light streams through the new opening and the first of the soldiers enters. Graham is able to see a dead ant and an attacking ant. He blasts it with the tommy gun and it seems to fall backwards into a hole.

GRAHAM:

Get more light in here.

As a torch is handed forward to Graham, we see his shirt is torn and bloody and his helmet is gone. He flashes the torch on the hole ahead. then around. We are in a sizeable chamber. The nest is below. Graham approaches the edge of the hole, followed by troops. He flashes the light into the cavity.

NEW
SCENE

285. FROM HIS VIEWPOINT

We SEE into the nest - ants - including two with wings. Also eggs.

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
104.

NEW
SCENE

286. ON GRAHAM AND SOLDIERS

As they look down into the nest.

GRAHAM:
Get Doctor Medford in here!

As the flame-thrower man makes ready to fire, Graham stops him;

GRAHAM:
Don't burn anything until we get the go ahead.
He uses the tommy gun on an o.s. ant.

NEW
SCENE

287. ANGLE ON OPENING

Troops are helping Medford and Patricia through the opening. O'Brien follows. Patricia rushes to Graham, concerned. He gives her a brief smile, then to Medford;

GRAHAM:
Is this it, Doctor?

Medford looks down as Graham flashes the light into the hole.

NEW
SCENE

288. THEIR VIEWPOINT

The light beam shows the two winged ants.

MEDFORD'S VOICE:
They are new princess ants - new queens!
The light shifts to reveal some eggs.

MEDFORD'S VOICE:
Yes - this is the egg chamber....hold it - there...
The light reveals two huge eggs - hatched - open as we saw them in the New Mexico nest.

MEDFORD'S VOICE:
The same as we found in New Mexico. Are there any more?

The light beam moves. There are no more big eggs. Only dead and alive ants, including the winged ants.

NEW
SCENE

289. ON GROUP

Medford looks at Graham and O'Brien. He sighs heavily - exhausted from his efforts and his worry.

(CONTINUED)

"THEM!"
FINAL

CHANGE
12/3/53
105.

289 (Cont.)

NEW
SCENE

GRAHAM:

Are we too late?

MEDFORD:

(shakes his head)

Fortunately, we were in time. I'm certain no new queens have escaped from this nest. The job will be done when these are destroyed.

He pats Graham with affection and nods at the nest. Graham nods at the flame-thrower man.

GRAHAM:

Okay, soldier. Burn it out.

The flame-thrower man squirts jets of flame down into the nest. Graham puts an arm around Patricia. She comes close against him as they watch the flames. Graham suddenly frowns and looks down at Patricia;

GRAHAM:

Pat?

(she looks up at him)

If these monsters got started as the result of the first bomb in 1945...what about all the others that have been exploded since?

PATRICIA:

I don't know.

Medford looks at Graham.

MEDFORD:

Nobody knows, Robert. When Man entered the Atomic Age, he opened a door into a new world. What we'll eventually find in that new world - nobody can predict.

Graham and O'Brien exchange looks. Graham holds Patricia closer to him. All watch the flaming nest. Over the flames:

FADE OUT.

THE END.